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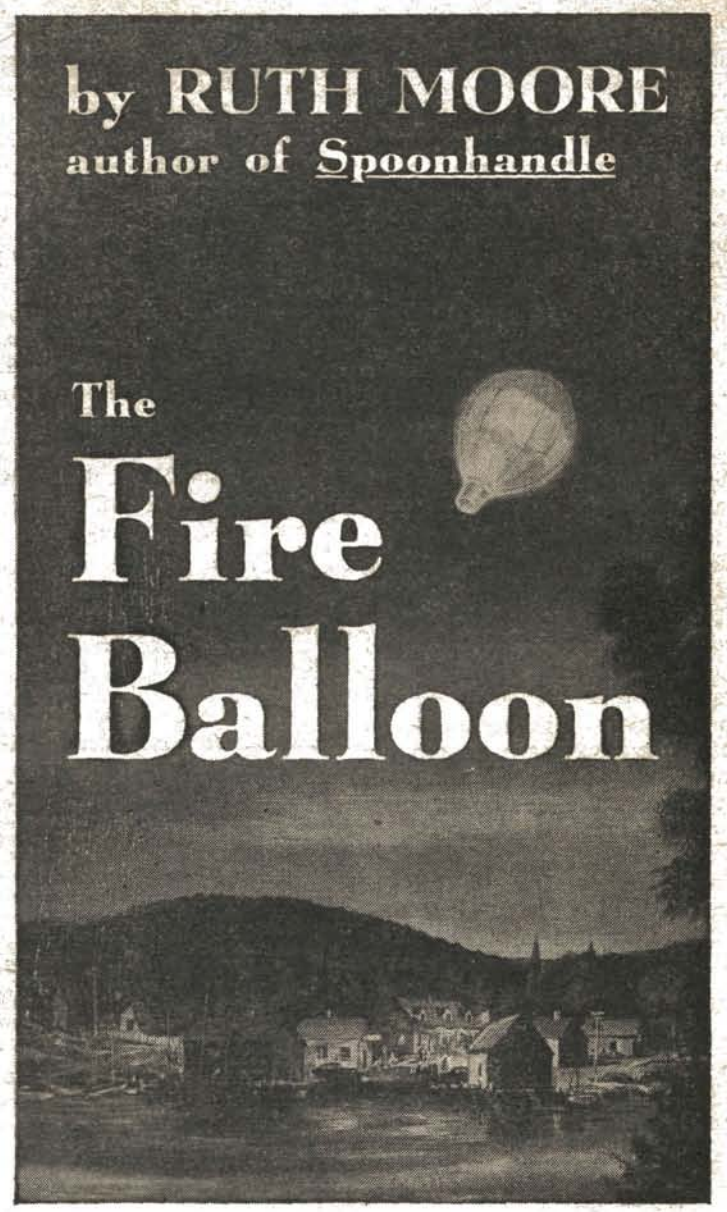
by RUTH MOORE
author of Spoonhandle



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MORROW

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TRADE Winds

THE LITERARY SCENE

● ● In Normandy, André Gide has moved into a new house with a study that contains every modern convenience. His cousin visited him, found him busy writing at a folding table in a ground-floor hallway. "The new study is much too comfortable," he explained. "I simply can't get any work done there."

In Southern France, Somerset Maugham also was having trouble. With him it was the scenery. Ken McCormick noted that in the luxurious workroom on the roof of his Villa Mauresque he had had the window facing the Mediterranean bricked up. "Now," said Mr. Maugham grimly, "I will write—and not look out at the sea all morning."

In countless garrets, tenements, and shanties in America, thousands of writers have other minor irritations with which they have constantly to contend. They can't earn enough for food and lodging. Several complain that it impairs the quality of their work.

● ● In Los Angeles, Dorothy Hughes, author of "Ride the Pink Horse," finished her first non-mystery story, "The Big Barbecue."

● ● In Philadelphia, the Saunders Company, publisher of the Kinsey report, was asked to name what best sellers had preceded its "Sexual Behavior in the Human Male." The answer: Beckman's "Treatment in General Practice" and Maxim and Bloom's "Histology"!

● ● At the *New York Herald Tribune* Forum, Louis Bromfield, six-foot-two, complained that he had to bend down to talk into the mike. Bernard Baruch, two inches taller than Bromfield, warned, "It will be even worse when you grow up."

● ● In the Hotel Meurice, reports Louis Sobol, Bill Saroyan removed his ferocious Armenian-style mustache. "Where's your mustache?" asked his five-year-old son Aram. "Shaved it off," said Saroyan. Aram studied the effect and ordered, "Shave it on again."

● ● In the Colgate-Palmolive Treasure Chest contest, an individualist from the McCann-Erickson Ad Agency gave the judges a start by submitting this jingle:

> A fresher brighter looking skin
> Is something I would like to win.
> I'll get Palmolive soap today.
> Tomorrow I will buy Camay.

● ● In Big Bear, California, Craig Rice, who creates detectives that can solve any mystery (her latest and best is "The Fourth Postman" Adv.) lost all the papers her youngest son needed to join the Navy. Her husband located them two days later in the pressure cooker (which she never had used, for fear it would blow up).

● ● In New York, the Communist newspaper *The Daily Worker* managed to inject the party line into a review of Grosset & Dunlap's new "Culinary Arts Encyclopedia [illegible] Book"! "This book offers a great many simple, easy-to-prepare meals," admitted the class-conscious critic, "but, like many others, it also goes in for a lot of ornate dishes and table decorations dear to the hearts of the wives of Taft-Hartley supporters." Suggestion to the staff of *The Daily Worker*: attend (if they'll let you) the next "buffet supper" at the Soviet Embassy. . . .

● ● In San Francisco, a fight referee told columnist Herb Caen, "Say, I gotta get a book for my friend for Christmas and I don't know whether to get him a red one or a blue one." Caen smiled and said, "Maybe it won't make any difference. Maybe your friend is color blind." "I don't think so," mourned the referee. "Last time I saw him on the street he called me by name."

● ● In Boston, David Bradley's "No Place to Hide" was singled out, within a month of delivery of the manuscript, for serialization in *Atlantic Monthly*, publication by Little, Brown, distribution by the Book-of-the-Month Club, condensation by *Reader's Digest*, and February release in a twenty-five-cent Bantam edition. The author is a young Army doctor who was assigned to the Bikini atom bomb tests. His book tells what the bomb did—and can do again.

● ● In Dublin, Ireland, Thornton Wilder settled down for the winter to write a novel—and commute by air to Frankfurt, Germany, where he will conduct a course in comparative literature. No homebody he!

● ● In Moscow, Josef Stalin received a gift of S. P. Fedotov's "Treasury of Russian Spirituality," dispatched by an alert Sheed & Ward operative who remembered that Stalin studied at one time for the priesthood. No acknowledgment to date.

● ● In Berkeley, a new secretary at the University of California Press sought an urgent directive in the files, found it in a bulging container labeled "Ignored." Another interesting folder was marked "Letters Written but Not Sent."

● ● In Berlin, near the end of World War Two, relates Joel Sayre in his memorable book "The House Without

"It's nice all right, but we had our minds set on an old barn or garage we could work over like they do in all the magazines."

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a Roof," pedestrians were apt to hear a cry from above, "Achtung! Der Fuehrer kommt." Immediately thereafter, a bust or portrait of Hitler sailed out of the window. Sayre says that the Berliners' last rallying cry was, "Enjoy the war, children. The peace is sure to be nasty."

● ● In the S. & S. inner sanctum, Eloise Kaltenbach catalogued the series of lucky breaks that had contributed to one not-unduly-modest author's success and concluded, "He's so lucky that if he tumbled off a liner in the dead of night in mid-ocean, he'd fall on top of a mermaid."

● ● In Lindenhurst, Long Island, the Detjen Corporation announced an adjustable, all-metal, electrically charged screen for doors or windows which, in effect, acts as an electric chair on all insects. The company to date has ignored an overworked editor's inquiry as to whether the new invention will work on authors.

● ● In New York, Louis Greene, of *Publishers' Weekly*, watched enviously while an adroit prestidigitator put a match to a bogus dollar bill and tossed the flaming paper in the air, where it disappeared in a puff of smoke. Greene wheedled one of the trick bills from the kind-hearted magician, and strode into the office of Mildred Smith and Fred Melcher the following morning to exhibit his skill. He lit the bill with studied nonchalance but then forgot to throw it in the air. The bandage should be off by the holidays.

● ● In Nice, they still tell of the day the late Frank Harris, who had the not uncommon failing of claiming other people's anecdotes as his own, regaled a gathering with a brilliant story by Anatole France, and then blandly took credit for it. Oscar Wilde listened carefully, and then observed, "You know, Harris, Anatole France would have ruined that story."

● ● In Orford, N. H., Charles Jackson's eight-year-old daughter Sarah discovered that her father's "The Lost Weekend" was well known in local grade-school circles. She reported, "Kids keep yelling at me, 'Your papa drinks whis-key! Your papa drinks whis-key!' " "What do you answer?" asked Mr. Jackson anxiously. "I tell them it's not true," said Sarah stoutly. "I tell them you can't even stand the taste of the stuff—that it's Mama who drinks it all the time!"

● ● In Washington, professional pollsters, reeling from their Election Day debacle, wondered how much face they had lost with hitherto-blind worshipers in publishing and film circles, and wished they had paid more attention to a book called "How to Predict Elections," by Louis H. Bean, economic advisor to the Secretary of Agriculture. Mr. Bean, writing in advance of both nominating conventions, forecast not only the election of President Truman, but Democratic victories in the Senate and House!

The gagsters, of course, were in full cry as soon as the returns were official. Racetraek devotees thought Harry Truman should submit to a saliva test (a scientific procedure designed to expose trainers who have illegally doped horses before an important race). Jubilant Democrats suggested that Tom Dewey climb back on top of a wedding cake. Pegler and O'Donnell were caught with their rants down. Wisecracks about grim Ropers and lame Gallups were five cents a dozen. Worst of all were columnists' coy admissions beginning "Boy, was I wrong!" or "Bring on that dinner of crow"—as though their readers didn't remember!

Best story was told by Bob Considine: Republican big-wigs, gathered at headquarters to celebrate an anticipated landslide, received returns amidst deepening gloom. The few who were left when Dewey conceded were so crushed they couldn't even speak. One man, however, finally pulled himself together, sighed heavily, and exclaimed, "Well, we scared the hell out of them, anyhow!"

Best observation came from Robert Sherwood: "What a man was Franklin D. Roosevelt! Dead almost four years—and he's just won another election!" —BENNETT CERF.

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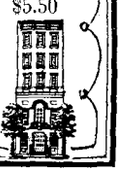

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The Saturday Review of Literature

From Me to You

J. P. McEVOY

J. P. McEvoy

AT a tender age in a tough Chicago I was introduced to the greeting-card industry. As poet laureate of the sports page I extruded a daily column of brash quips and brassy verse for the old Chicago *Record-Herald*. One day a publisher phoned me; he had been reading my verse and would I come right over? I arrived in his office approximately as he was hanging up. "Did you ever write Christmas greetings?" he asked. I said "No" and added, flippantly, "Does anyone?" His pained look made me go on to explain that like most people I assumed Christmas jingles wrote themselves. The publisher assured me that if I would learn to write Christmas-card verse I would be rich and famous.

That was a hot night on the South Side of Chicago, and my first but not my last experience about snow and Santa Claus in the middle of July. I knocked off two dozen Christmas jingles, and mailed them to P. F. Volland, the publisher. The next day Volland phoned me frantically to come and see him. "I'll take twenty of these," he purred. "How much do you want for them?" I mentioned the biggest sum of money I could think of in those days—$100—and almost immediately a check was in my hands.

For a second I felt a dull, gnawing ache. I should have asked for more. But how much more? Then common sense overcame my cupidity. Why should I expect to make more than $100 for an evening's bout with a typewriter? Later, when I joined the Volland Company as a greeting-card writer and had a chance to look at the sales sheets, I realized that my first flash of greed was pure intuition. Volland had engraved those first twenty Christmas cards on plain wedding stock "with eps" (envelopes to match), boxed them to retail twenty for $1, and sold 100,000 boxes that first year to the dealers for $50,000. Ten years later Volland was still selling 25,000 each of some of these cards. twenty years later they were in the line and going strong, and thirty years later—which is just about now —I can still find some of them in the stores, although my eyes are so blinded with tears I can hardly read such gems as:

Eve had no Christmas
Neither did Adam
Didn't have socks—
Nobody had 'em.
Never got cards—
Nobody did.
Take this and have it
On Adam, old kid.

After years of writing literally thousands of variations of Merry Christmas, Happy Easter, To My Valentine, On Your Birthday, Mother of Mine, Father You Old So and So, I took my hot typewriter up to Minneapolis, where the Buzza Company published greeting cards. I had made a deal for three years to appear for one month in the spring to write the fall line of friendly greetings, and one month in the fall to write the spring line of gay tidings.

One of my little chores was to write every year 150 variations in verse of Merry Christmas. Each of these had to say Merry Christmas in a different way and also be different from any Merry Christmas card ever written by anyone, anywhere. But of course that was only the beginning. A greeting card may or may not have sentiment but it must have salability. It must be so general that anyone can send it to anybody. It must be so specific that when you read it you feel not only that it was written for you to send to that person you have in mind—but after you have read it you must begin to believe that you wrote it: who else could have said just what you were thinking in the very words you would have used? The trade calls this magic life stuff Me to You.

LET me give you a classic example. Nearly fifty years ago a Chicago advertising man, Wilbur D. Nesbitt, wrote a little greeting-card verse for the Volland Company. It sold by the hundreds of thousands. It was made into a wall motto, Valentines, Birthday, Christmas, and every other kind of greeting—and today, still published by Volland, still sells as big as ever:

All to myself I think of you
Think of the things we used to do
Think of the things we used to say
Think of each happy yesterday
Sometimes I sigh, sometimes I smile
But I keep each olden golden while
All to myself.

Simple as a dove, yet cunning as a fox. Note: it can be bought by either a man or a woman to send to either sex so the sales are doubled. Any friend can send it to anyone on any occasion, any degree of relative can send it to anyone in the family—from Grandma to a fifth cousin once removed.

The roster of greeting-card writers ranges from Tennyson to Kipling to

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James Whitcomb Riley to Joyce Kilmer to Eddie Guest. Guest's "I'd Like to Be the Sort of Friend That You Have Been to Me" was first published in 1914 and is still the sort of friend you would like to clasp hands with across a bank president's desk.

Probably the biggest selling birthday card had only one line: "Birthdays are like measles—everyone has 'em." And one of the next biggest, written a generation ago by Dixie Willson, is still up in the all-time hit parade of schmaltz you can't forget:

Count your garden by the flowers
Never by the leaves that fall;
Count your days by golden hours
Don't remember clouds at all!
Count your nights by stars, not shadows;
Count your life by smiles, not tears—
And with joy on this your Birthday,
Count your age by friends, not years.

Greeting-card sentiments such as these are criticized as poor poetry—but they are not supposed to be poetry. They are rhymed messages. The poet who thinks it is easy to write a greeting card which will sell should try it sometime.

FOR some twenty-five years I have been out of the greeting-card business and the industry has quadrupled, which is quite a coincidence. There is another odd coincidence: No other business makes such an effort to probe the secrets of other people, lay bare their beating hearts in full color—and at the same time no industry can clam up quite so tightly about its own secrets. Perhaps this is because it is such a highly competitive business. Each company's product is gone over with a microscope by every other company. Their salesmen go from store to store trying to appear innocent but prying around, like so many FBI sleuths, into the comparative success of their rivals. Let one company come out with a best-selling Christmas card in which each of the three camels has two humps instead of one and the following year practically every company will show two-hump camels.

Years ago Christmas card designs were pretty well limited to (a) candles that had been burning a considerable time and were running all over the place, (b) camels alone, (c) camels with Wise Men on them, (d) Wise Men leading camels, (e) bells, (f) a row of medieval dead-end kids (carol-singing waifs) lined up under a lighted window holding a roll of wallpaper and saying "Ah!"

But "the Art attracts—the Sentiment sells," say the dealers and every year the art has grown more attractive. This year's Christmas cards will include superb color reproductions ranging from Raphael to Matisse to Grant Wood to Dali. So keen is the competition (there are more than 100 publishers) and avid the demand for novelty (more than 1,500,000,000 Christmas cards will be bought this year), there is no letup in the pressure for something newer and better.

The biggest company in the business today is Hall Brothers of Kansas City, Mo., who make 1,000,000 Hallmark greeting cards a day and have 200 salesmen calling on some 15,000 dealers with 5,000 different greetings "for all occasions." Well, practically all. Do you want a greeting to be sent "For Your Birthday in the Nineties"? They make it. And it is so artfully contrived it can be sent to either a man or a woman. Incidentally, you can buy "Mother" cards for as much as $5 each, but thirty-five cents is top for Pop. No comment.

There are 700 different items in the Hallmark birthday line, ranging from five cents to $1 retail. The birthday cards range from "Baby's First" through every year up to twelve, when they jump to "Sweet Sixteen," and "Eighteen" then "Twenty-first," and then a big hop over to the "Sixties." A commentary on human nature is a curious fact reported to me by Steve Shannon, who runs the Greeting Card Industry Association: it is impossible to sell a birthday card for the fiftieth birthday, consequently companies don't make one. Apparently fifty is that awful day when you have to stop kidding yourself, and yet you are not old enough to brag about it.

Humorists have a field day over the different kinds of greeting cards on sale, ranging practically from Greetings on Your First Tooth to Sympathy for the Loss of Your Uppers. It is generally assumed that every company has a "dream-it-up" department, full of diabolically ingenious writers and artists who concoct these odd items. The fact is that the dear, queer public dreams them up. A woman comes into a store and demands a card to be sent to a red-headed niece who has just had her tonsils snatched. The card must say "Niece," must mention the tonsils, and must have the specific Me to You—the heartbeat of the business. Next week the red-headed niece, now fully recovered, will appear in the store looking for a card "To Thank My Aunt Who Remembered Me on the Occasion of My Recent Tonsillectomy." And the sentiment must go something like this:

Here's thank you, my dear,
For your message of cheer—
With a prayer that I'm still
In the Will.

The demand by the public for cards for all occasions passes understanding, yet there is nothing the dealers and publishers can do but try to keep up.

THEY seem to succeed very nicely. People mail more than 3,000,000 000 greeting cards a year—$100,000,000 for postage to carry them. The Big Five—Hallmark, Gibson, Rustcraft, Volland, and Norcross—will reluctantly admit it is a $100,000,000 in-

(*Continued on page* 38)

Doubled Goods

By Robert P. Tristram Coffin

HERE at the azure corner of the world
Sweet fields come down to meadows of the sea,
Red clovers dip their flowers in high water,
White houses and white sails keep company.
No cowbell rings so lonely but there is
A bell that answers it upon the waves,
A hollow bell rung lonesome by the tide
Tolls above the schooners' shadowy graves.
The hayrack and the boat go side by side,
Level, on green and gold, small brothers ride.

Every good or sorrowful thing comes double:
Blue herons and morning-glories bring up dawn,
Blue shells of wild-pea fringe the mussel-bed,
Bleached clamshells shine by daisies on the lawn.
When the strong man bows his iron head
On his empty arms at night and grieves,
A strong wind from the ocean will arise
And come and mourn with him around the eaves.
When wives sit still with sorrow in their eyes,
High over all the world the seagull cries.

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The War. *When future literary historians look back at 1948, they are apt to tag it "The Year of the Great Memoirs of World War II." Winston Churchill's ringing "The Gathering Storm," Robert Sherwood's simple but eloquent story of "Roosevelt and Hopkins," and Dwight Eisenhower's lucid report on his "Crusade in Europe" (the latter reviewed below)—all belong on the shelves of every thoughtful American and seem destined to be referred to as long as men ponder the lessons of the recent war. . . . In the past bienneum publishers' lists have been peppered with official and unofficial histories of the Army and Navy in World War II. Now we are hearing from the youngest of the services. This week we review two competent accounts of Air Force activity and the first volume in what promises to be an excellent air arm history.*

Accounting to the American Public

CRUSADE IN EUROPE. By Dwight D. Eisenhower. New York: Doubleday & Co. 1948. 559 *pp.* $5.

Reviewed by CRANE BRINTON

THESE are General Eisenhower's personal memoirs of his service in the last war. They provide an orderly, objective, well-documented account of the war in Western Europe from our first active participation to the early and more hopeful days of the four-power occupation of Berlin. They are hardly autobiographical at all in the conventional, subjective sense. This is the General's account of his mission, addressed to the American public; it is military history written by a professional soldier who has himself lived a full soldier's life, culminating in supreme command.

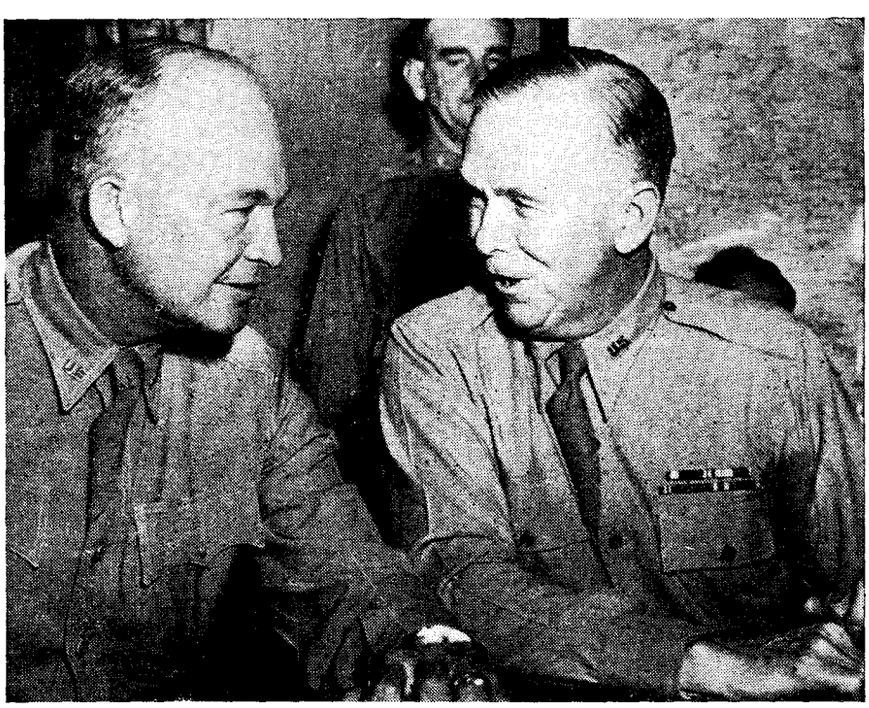
General Eisenhower has made successfully the necessary compromises between writing for the experts and writing for the layman. You can tell from his habits of style and exposition that he has written and read thousands of orders, directives, memoranda, in suitable military style. But he manages to translate all this into a clear and readable account of the war as he saw it. He saw it, of course, from headquarters, and you will naturally not find here the detailed pictures you would get from histories of fighting units, nor the personal, dramatic, or realistic touches of the war correspondent or the war novelist. General Eisenhower is interested in what is called in Washingtonese the "overall picture" of the war.

Yet it is by no means a dull, lifeless picture. General Eisenhower is interested in much more than conventional strategy and tactics. He is interested in the whole complex process by which the great Allied military machine was built and moved—and he is extremely aware that the word "machine" is a misleading metaphor, that this machine was really human beings, that in spite of all the mechanization of modern warfare, the human being, the soldier, still wins or loses battles. He will interrupt a rather conventional account of how VII Corps advanced to cover the left flank, or some other tactical detail, with some reflections on discipline in a democratic army, on the importance of morale, on the relation between planning and action, on the differences between political and military purposes, on the prodigality with which the Russians used their manpower, and, occasionally, to give a brief portrait of a colleague. To the reader not especially addicted to military history, these reflective bits are the most interesting and most profitable part of the book.

For we can hardly know too much about a man who, but for his own free will, could almost certainly have been chosen President of the United States in 1948, a man who at fifty-eight years of age has still many years of active public life ahead of him. General Eisenhower must in any case have benefited from that worship we Americans bestow on a successful commander, and which in the past has been given to some not very well-rounded human beings. But there is clearly more than this automatic popularity in the feelings Americans have toward General Eisenhower.

He is, of course, photogenic in a manly way. He had always been accessible to his troops—the legends in the ETO almost all emphasized his human qualities, his freedom from the usual traits and habits of the brass. If to some connoisseurs of technical military skills Bradley seemed the great man of the theatre, if to a few romantics (and, to be fair, to many of his own Third Army) Patton seemed the true pattern of a soldier, there was no doubt that almost everyone except a few die-hard Anglophobes felt that Eisenhower was the right man in the right place.

Finally, General Eisenhower has always looked like a suitably democratic general, the kind of general who accepts the more generous and hopeful of American ideals, the kind of general who, at bottom, hates war. Whereas MacArthur was popular here at home chiefly among conservative



Dwight D. Eisenhower and George C. Marshall at Allied Headquarters in the North African Theatre—"The right man in the right place."

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Publisher's Gallery

—Drawn from life by Norkin.

XVIII: Donald C. Brace

DONALD C. BRACE, who has immortalized millions of printed words, probably has as much reverence for the spoken word as any man alive. It is inconceivable that a reckless syllable ever escaped his lips. With him the most modest question merits—and gets—respectful reflection before reply. In fact, he couples contemplation with travel among his pleasures after leaving his desk at Harcourt, Brace, where, since August, he has been board chairman.

Printer's ink first smudged his fingers when, aged twelve or so (circa 1893), he set type for his father's country newspaper in the Mohawk Valley. After earning a Phi Beta Kappa at Columbia, where he lavished many hours on the *Spectator*, he took a berth awaiting him at Henry Holt. Fifteen years later he and former classmate Alfred Harcourt left Holt to found Harcourt, Brace & Howe. On their first list was Sinclair Lewis, whose "Main Street" they released in 1920. Among their initial successes was "The Economic Consequences of the Peace" by J. M. Keynes. He glows especially, however, over securing Lytton Strachey, E. M. Forster, and Virginia Woolf. There is not much more unpublished Woolf material left, Mr. Brace advises.

In the Twenties and Thirties he went abroad about once a year to polish up English links. "I have done pretty much of everything," he says, "a great deal of editing." Once he wanted to write, "but publishing and writing don't go together at all. A publisher should devote himself to other people's writing. But today giving a new writer a hearing doesn't involve a few hundred dollars but a few thousand. It limits us." The firm's colophon is small. Big billing goes to authors and their titles.—R. G.

Old Guard people, or, worse yet, among cranks, imperialists, isolationists, and other really un-American groups, Eisenhower was popular with the great majority, Republican and Democrat alike, which hoped for a better world by improving—and sharing—the American Way.

General Eisenhower's firm refusal of a candidacy for which he believed himself not fitted did much to confirm his fellow countrymen in this high opinion of him. A reading of this book should offer further confirmation, and some more specific information as to the kind of man he is. He unquestioningly accepts the subordination, in a self-governing democratic society like our own, of the military to the political. He sincerely believes that war is an ugly necessity, an activity at which Americans must in this wicked world be as skilled as they possibly can, but which they must never cease to try to make unnecessary. He believes that the behavior of the Germans under Nazi rule threatened the very existence of everything he held dear. The title of this book is no mere publisher's device, but General Eisenhower's own deep feeling about his mission. This war was a crusade, just as Wilson's had been.

General Eisenhower is, then, an American idealist. But he is something more, or he could hardly have commanded the Allied Expeditionary Force. He has, as this book clearly shows, great analytical ability, the ability to think without letting his sentiments, his emotions, his desires, stain his thinking, and, finally, the ability to make a decision on the basis of this analysis, and to stick to it. Even here, General Eisenhower is no absolutist. He would not, despite the high repute of firmness as a military virtue, stick to a decision if new evidence called for new analysis and an amended decision. He has this gift of detachment almost paradoxically accompanied by the gift of warmth. He can compromise, he can be diplomatic, but he cannot be pushed around.

All this adds up to leadership admirably fitted to the task that confronted General Eisenhower. He wanted to beat the Germans and to do this with a minimum of human losses. From the start he determined to rise above, or better, to get around, those obstacles of national prestige which had always undermined coalition armies in the past. He handled with rare skill useful collaborators who could not easily adopt his own detachment, men like Montgomery and De Gaulle, men essential to the Allied cause, but difficult to handle for national as well as personal reasons. The interleaved staffs which planned and carried out the invasions of North Africa and Europe were a new thing in coalition warfare. Unlike Foch, Eisenhower really was an Allied commander. He thinks that this allied unity was the great achievement of this war, greater even than the sum total of mechanical and technical achievements. In it, his own personality had a very great part.

It is not a dashing, not a flamboyant, not an arresting personality. But surely that is precisely the point of his admirable adaptability to his task. It needed much, much more than the traditional soldierly virtues to steer, to hold together, that immense collaborative undertaking in human relations the planners called Overlord. It needed courage, discipline, firmness, of course. It needed from the individual soldier in all ranks the adaptability and ingenuity, especially in handling machines, that General Eisenhower singles out as characteristic of the American soldier.

At the top, however, the Allied Expeditionary Force needed those skills we still understand so little, at least in a formal, analytical sense, the "executive" or "administrative" skills in large-scale, indeed in colossal, enterprises. In retrospect it seems a miracle, in which somehow millions of separate-minded, separate-tempered individuals did work together almost as if they were real social animals like ants or bees. Some part of this miracle is clearly due to the gifts of men like General Eisenhower.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: No. 283

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 283 will be found in the next issue.

PARTY MH R DUTCE

TY PUK BRF UK

GULMCE SL, RYE BRCN

PUKAK FLMAGKCW,

LYDK TY R BUTCK.

OLGU ZTCCTYSG

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 282

Learning without thought is labor lost.

CONFUCIUS.

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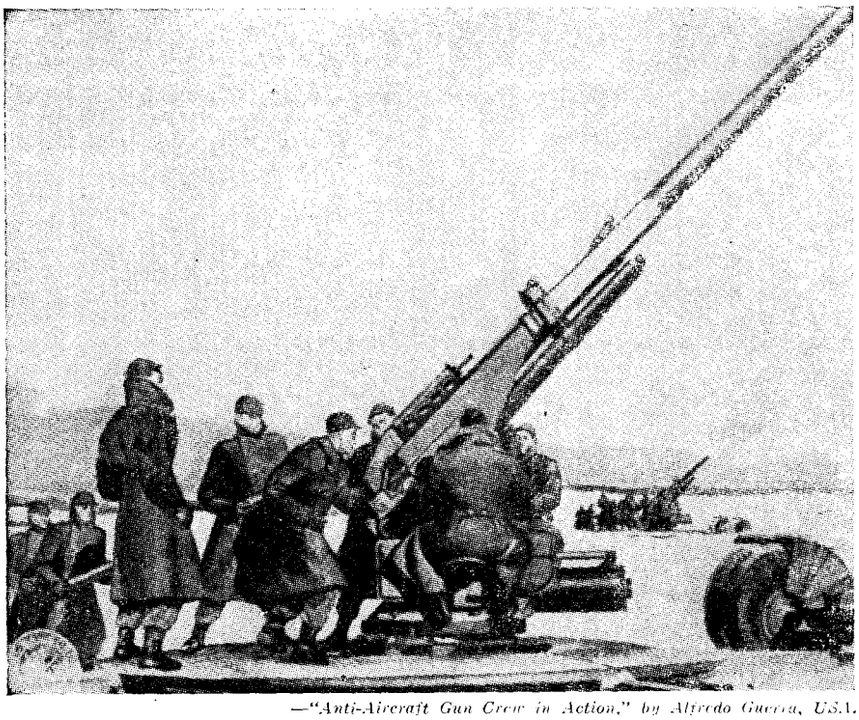

—"Anti-Aircraft Gun Crew in Action," by Alfredo Guerra, U.S.A.

Cornerstone of Our National Defense

AIR VICTORY: The Men and the Machines. By Harold B. Hinton. New York: Harper & Bros. 1948. 428 *pp.* $5.

THE AAF AGAINST JAPAN. By Vern Haugland. New York: Harper & Bros. 1948. 515 *pp.* $5.

THE ARMY AIR FORCES IN WORLD WAR II: Plans and Early Operations (January 1939 *to August* 1942). *Edited by W. F. Craven and J. L. Cate. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.* 1948. 788 *pp.* $5.

Reviewed by
MAJOR GENERAL EDWARD PECK CURTIS

THREE years after the end of World War II, those who fought it in Europe or in the Pacific are still arguing, often with considerable heat, as to the relative contribution of the three services to our victory. On one point, however, there is fairly unanimous opinion. It was Billy Mitchell who first propounded the doctrine that "the only defense against an air force is another air force, and the destruction of the enemy's aviation is the necessary preliminary to any successful operations." This principle was emphasized and reiterated by Field Marshal Montgomery, after his African campaign, and subscribed to by virtually all commanders, both victors and vanquished. Germany and Japan were winning when they controlled the air but faced certain defeat as soon as they had lost it.

To all those who are interested in the story of how the Allies, and particularly the United States, accomplished this objective, these three books will furnish a very complete and illuminating story. Two of them in addition trace the history of our air power back to its beginnings, through the long struggle for recognition against public indifference and open opposition from the other services.

It is a far cry from Kitty Hawk to Hiroshima or from the comparatively insignificant air operations of World War I to the vast strategic air offensives which left the cities of Japan and Germany heaps of rubble. It is, nevertheless, somewhat startling to read today in Colonel Hinton's "Air Victory" that the Baker Board, in 1934, reported, "These limitations show that the idea that aviation acting alone can control sea lanes or defend the coast or produce decisive results in any other mission contemplated under our policy are all visionary as is the idea that a very large and independent air force is necessary to defend our country against air attack." What appeared visionary in 1934 has become the cornerstone of our national defense policy in 1948, but in view of the fantastic development of air power under the stimulus of a global war, it is perhaps not extraordinary that its potential possibilities were recognized by only a few airmen of imagination and perseverance. The early story of their struggle to keep any semblance of an air force alive is well told, but Colonel Hinton's effort to condense the whole history of our wartime air development into one short volume results in a somewhat confused and overcrowded narrative.

"AAF Against Japan" has a more limited objective and is therefore more effective as a wartime story. From Pearl Harbor through the bitter retreat back to Australia, it is a stirring account of high courage and resourceful initiative trying desperately to compete against overwhelming superiority in numbers. The Doolittle Mission is treated briefly with a fair assessment of its probable results but little of the dramatic quality of its conception and the daring of its execution. After the tide of the air war turned in New Guinea, late in 1942, it is a story of striking back against the Japanese with increasing strength until the B-29's were able to deliver vital blows against the homeland.

Operations in the CBI theatre are treated in less detail but highlighted by the story of the First Air Commando Group under Colonels Philip Cochrane and John Alison. In probably the most unorthodox operations in the entire air war, these resourceful officers directed a force of gliders and transports which supported General Wingate's British troops in fighting far behind enemy lines. It is related that higher authority saw fit to criticize the somewhat unconventional and even unshaven appearance of the Commando personnel. Colonel Cochrane's resulting directive to his troops is required reading.

"The Army Air Forces in World War II" is the first of seven volumes assembled by the Historical Division of the Air Force and sponsored by the University of Chicago. The task was undertaken with the understanding that the authors would have access to all pertinent documents and would enjoy perfect freedom of interpretation so that they could avoid any temptation to "record victories and gloss over the mistakes and wasteful sacrifices." In this they have so far succeeded admirably, with the result that we have a restrained and scholarly account of Air Force activities during the Plans and Early Operations period from January 1939 to August 1942. Richard Watson's chapter covering the events at Pearl Harbor and Clark Field, in the Philippines, during the tragic first few days gives a particularly clear and fair-minded account of what happened and an honest assessment of the effects of the crushing disaster. The testimony of General Brereton and General Sutherland is dispassionately analyzed in the controversy over responsibiilty for the loss of most of our B-17's in the early Japanese attacks, but there is no dogmatic interpretation of what was admittedly a confused record of confused events.

The air war in the Pacific was born

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in defeat, and for at least two years our operations were dictated by the necessities of the moment in a heart-breaking endeavor to stem the Japanese advance. In the European theatre, however, the Air Forces went to war more deliberately in accordance with careful plans and a long-range objective. There were, to be sure, long arguments on the highest level as to the proper strategy to be used against Germany in 1942, both in the air and on the ground. Russia was clamoring for a second front, a demand which up to that point was being answered in a small way by Air Marshal Harris's RAF bomber command, the only outfit then able to carry offensive operations to the German homeland. There were two hopeful plans considered by the combined chiefs in 1942—one known as a "Round-up," a proposed invasion of the Continent, and "Sledgehammer," a small-scale diversionary operation which was to be mounted only as a desperate chance if the Russians should appear to be on the verge of collapse. Neither alternative appealed to the Churchill government, nor in either was the American Air Force assigned a role exactly suited to its own strategic ideas.

Our Air Forces had long been committed to the doctrine of precision daylight bombing as opposed to the then current RAF night area bombing technique. Based on the experience of the German Air Force in the battle of Britain, plus the experience of the RAF in daylight bombing against Germany, professional opinion was overwhelmingly against the feasibility of daylight bombing. We had two new contributions to this situation—the Norden bombsight and superior defensive fire power in 50-caliber machine guns used in tight bomber formations. The continued insistence of General Eaker and General Spaatz on the importance of at least giving this system a chance resulted finally in the success of our strategic air offensive against Germany. The subsequent addition of long-range fighters assured the successful conclusion of their plans.

The first volume of "The Army Air Forces in World War II" augurs well for the success of the series. No serious student of the history of the Air Forces's contribution to our victory can afford to overlook it. However, for an authoritative analysis of the fundamental principles of air power, no "Mahan of the Air" has yet appeared.

Edward Peck Curtis was an ace pursuit pilot in the Air Service during World War I. During the late war he was Chief of Staff of the United States Air Forces in Europe.

Fiction. *The reader who is interested in the discovery of new fiction writers will find two first novels reviewed this week worth consideration. "High John the Conqueror," by John W. Wilson, restates in simpler terms the theme of Steinbeck's "The Grapes of Wrath." The victim of the wealthy landholders and the banks are in this case inarticulate and wretched Negro farmers living along the Brazos River in Texas. In "Lord Love Us," A. M. P. Stratton creates a new lost generation evolving from the chaos of the Second World War. Both novels are reversions to older and well-exploited themes, but the years have brought to them subtle changes in accent and meaning.*

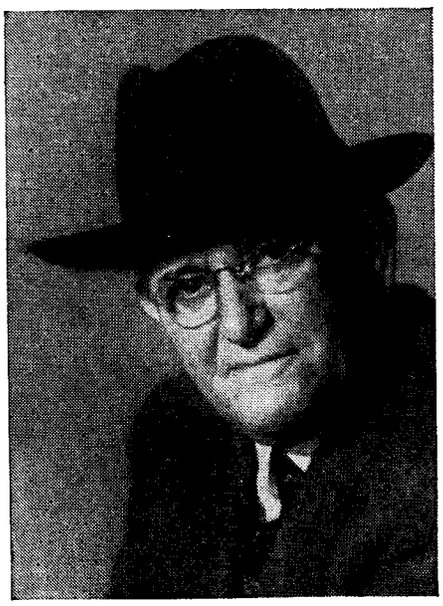
Palestine in Christ's Day

THE BIG FISHERMAN. By Lloyd C. Douglas. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1948. 581 *pp.* $3.75.

Reviewed by BRADFORD SMITH

ATTEMPTS to rewrite the Bible are as a rule impresive failures as even Milton and Mann have demonstrated. Any expansion of the plain, compressed Biblical narrative tends to look like embroidery. However excellent the scholarship, however noble the purpose, however distinguished the literary craft, there remains an impression of something meretricious, inflated, needlessly expanded. The known story seems slowed and decked out, robbed of force, intensity, and life.

Lloyd Douglas's retelling of the ministry and death of Jesus through the story of Simon called Peter is such a failure, and since it is probably destined to sell a million copies there is no harm in telling the whole truth.



—*Mina Turner.*

"Lloyd C. Douglas converts the great Christian drama into something soft, sentimental."

The story, considered apart from style, interpretation, and literary skill, is good. Fara, child of an Arabian princess and the Jewish tetrarch of Galilee, vows to murder the father who has abandoned her mother. Carrying out her vow, she forsakes her Arabian lover and becomes acquainted with Simon and Jesus. Based on a sure-fire pattern—boy chasing girl all over the map while each tries to sacrifice his own happiness for the welfare of the other—the blending of the fictional with the historic characters is skilfully done and, except for one cheap forecast of the future (a cardinal sin in historical fiction) and one very unlikely coincidence, remarkably well contrived, especially as the threads are gathered at the end. Palestine in Christ's day comes alive. From humble farrier to Roman proconsul and Joseph of Arimathea the human types and surrounding circumstances are so set down as to be memorable. With Simon and Jesus Mr. Douglas is less successful. The interpretation of Simon lacks depth of understanding, while to make Jesus human and familiar Mr. Douglas has resorted to a forced and repeated buildup which seems shoddy, undignified, and unnecessary.

Chief fault of "The Big Fisherman" is a lack of literary skill appropriate to the theme. Lacking the magnificence of Milton or the insight of Mann, Mr. Douglas converts the great Christian drama into something soft, sentimental, diluted with words. Scenes and people are described rather than experienced; the result is journalistic rather than literary.

"It is useless," he went on, "to sew a patch on an old garment. The worn-out fabric has no strength to support good cloth. It

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is of no profit to pour active wine into an old, dried, inflexible wine-skin." Turning toward David he asked, "What do you say, friend?"

"Simon!" she exclaimed. "Has it not occurred to you that Jesus may be wanting you for some great service? Maybe he is training you for it . . . You know! — the way they train soldiers — to endure hardships—and learn to obey—and ask no questions! The commander gives them heavy packs to carry—and long marches—and they are not told where they are going—or why!"

Mr. Douglas, as everyone knows, is a sincere Christian and an able interpreter of the Christian message. But in this case his earnestness and good faith are not matched by an equivalent literary taste. To write "Naomi would raise all hell until they returned to their jobs," and, "He tried to interject a gentle protest, but she went on, her husky voice breaking with emotion"— and to do this not by exception but by habit is to cheapen the product beyond repair. The worst examples are the paraphrases of the parables, where all the charm and dignity and directness are lost. A popular misuse, several times, of the word "disinterested" does not help to reassure one.

If readers of "The Big Fisherman" are stimulated into reading the Gospels, the book will have served a useful purpose. For there they will find the simplicity, the strength, the dramatic power and restraint and dignity which Mr. Douglas, like others, has failed to capture.

Bradford Smith is the author of "The Story of Jesus," a rearrangement of the Gospels into continuous narrative form.

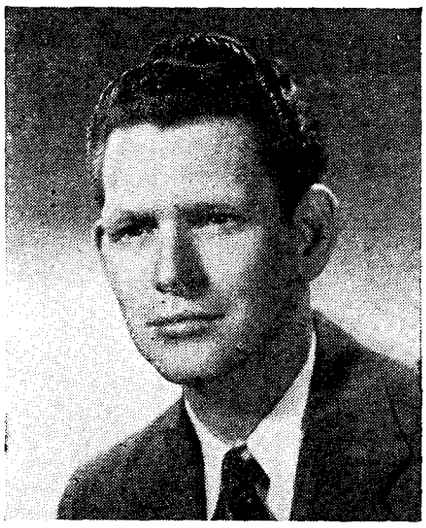
Black Man with the Hoe

HIGH JOHN THE CONQUERER. By John W. Wilson. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1948. 165 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by ROBERT HALSBAND

THIS short, first novel is admirable as regional writing, for it recreates the countryside that lies along the Brazos River in southeast Texas. There, corn and cotton grow in fertile fields, but when the river overflows its banks, it destroys the crops and then, ironically, retreats to leave the soil richer than before. We see this landscape laid out before us in the dry, palpitating heat, the contours of its hills and fields, the reddish taste and color of its soil, and the white dustiness of its turnrow roads. The figures on the landscape come alive too. With the exception of the conquering John Chaney, they are all Negro farmers, uneducated and inarticulate. The projection of the mind and feelings of a "man with the hoe" is a challenging task. In "The Grapes of Wrath," which has clearly influenced this book, the Joads were perhaps over-articulate, and had, besides, the preacher Casy to state their communal *mystique*. Without superimposing any eloquence or intruding his own comments, Mr. Wilson expresses clearly, often with subtlety, the inchoate emotions and impulses of his characters. He records their pungent dialect so that it rings true; it is not quaint or folksy.

Cleveland Webster, the main character, is a tenant of Chaney, and respects the white man until the white man tries to seduce his wife. Cleveland's father works his own farm until the river destroys his crop. Then, since he has no reserves to carry him until his next crop, he must desert the land to its mortgagee, Chaney. These two single strands of plot make up the neatly contrived story. A less restrained writer would have knotted them with violence, but the story is convincing precisely because it displays the tragedy in human dimensions of ingrown bitterness and frustration.



"Flaws seem trivial compared with John W. Wilson's honesty, perception, restraint."

High John gives the story its title because, although he remains in the background, he represents the ruthless economic forces that are conquering the farm lands. The Websters, like their counterparts the Joads, are being driven off the land to make way for progress: that is, for big farms that can be mechanically cultivated and that can become investments for tycoons and banks. In Steinbeck's novel these forces are vague, almost mythological; here they are personified in the red-faced, dehumanized Chaney, a man who is driven by inner compulsions to increase his holdings and yet who enjoys no warm, human satisfactions.

With all these abundant excellences, the novel has serious technical faults. It is too much a succession of fragments. Although each part is fine by itself, the whole (at least in a novel) is less than the sum of its parts. The lack of cohesion is the confusion in chronology, of blurred cause of erratic changes in pace, of focus of attention, and of interruptions by long, irrelevant flashbacks. Such flaws, perhaps intended as stylistic stunts, hinder the narrative. But they are matters which seem trivial compared to Mr. Wilson's considerable gifts as a writer, his honesty, perception, and restraint.

The Old Actress

By Howard Griffin

SHE dressed in pointlace as if she were always on her way to Newport
and a cartwheel hat cluttered with flowers:
you expected an ivied crook to blossom in her hand
even in shuttered rooms
and her shoes to take wing like wild birds and flit into the wallpaper.
In her day she had been photographed on tiger-rugs, on Greek stairs,
but
time has now taken from her all
except fine ankles, like invincible stylobates
no broken shaft might hide.
. . . This face that Sargent wrought a semblance of is wrecked,
the maquillage of death already clear
from which only the eyes burn like fox-eyes from leaves.
In *John-a-Dreams* for years she toured the country;
she brought Ibsen to Cane Creek and Fayetteville . . .
Now she lives in a vast house near Red Bank.
—Her famous voice can be heard over the zinnia-beds
by those who pass by afternoons
but only her parrots recognize the tones
that were to Oswald all the vanished sun.

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Complex Woman & Fickle Flemish Lass

THE EMPEROR'S DUCHESS. By Countess Waldeck. New York: Doubleday & Co. 1948. 305 pp. $3.

ERICA'S RETURN. By Louise de Vilmorin. New York: Random House. 1948. 152 pp. $2.50.

Reviewed by PAMELA TAYLOR

SHE might have been a character from fiction, Laure Junot, Duchesse d'Abrantes, so dramatic were the contrasts of her life, so fabulous the years of her success, so tragic her death. But, although Countess Waldeck has chosen to give us her story in novel form, Laure Junot actually lived, and more closely than any other member of his court except his family, perhaps, saw Napoleon's star rise and plunge downward.

As a little girl, the Duchesse d'Abrantes had known Napoleon well, for he was often at her mother's, the widowed Madame Permon's, house; indeed, he proposed to the lady, and was refused. Laure he nicknamed "petite peste" and she retaliated with "Puss in Boots," which, her husband later reminded her frequently, was hardly a suitable way in which to refer to the Emperor. Tiny, exotically beautiful, Laure was married at sixteen to Andrache Junot, a handsome, dissipated, and exceedingly difficult young man who had been Bonaparte's secretary at the siege of Toulon, had risen rapidly and developed a passionate and fanatic attachment to his King.

The young couple's fortunes were an eternal see-saw, for while Junot's devotion to Napoleon and his occasional brilliant victories in the field brought him honors and advancement, he was too uncertain a quantity to keep at court in any high position, too poor an administrator to govern well the countries where his campaigns were successful. Governor of Paris, he was sent away to command the Gironde Army as punishment for his affair with Napoleon's sister, Caroline Murat; victorious in the Portuguese campaign he was created Duc d'Abrantes and made governor, but was obliged to withdraw his forces from the country after encountering Wellington at Vimciro. He served in Spain under Masséna, in the Russian campaign, where he was badly wounded, was made first French governor of Illyria, and died, victim of extraordinary hallucinations, raving mad. Laure Junot spent much of her time at court, some with her husband in his campaigns. Disillusioned by his constant affairs,

-From the jacket of "The Emperor's Duchess."

she finally followed her worldly friends' advice to retaliate.

Countess Waldeck first shows us Laure Junot through the eyes of a rising French journalist, who has been presented to this, by now, almost legendary woman and on impulse, one day in June 1838 calls at her apartment, only to find her dying, her creditors stripping her rooms of their furnishings. A mass of papers tossed out of a desk to make it easier to load into the waiting van puts into his hands her letters and journals. He rushes home, and reading all night reconstructs the brilliant, rich years of her youth, while her husband still lived. The scandals, intrigues, and politics of Napoleon's court, the intimate life of a complicated, beautiful and compassionate woman, live vividly in these absorbing pages.

In an epilogue the young journalist sketches her last years, recounted by Fissont, the Duc's devoted secretary; d'Abrantes's terrible death; how the Duchesse, with four children and stupendous debts, lived for a time on her husband's staggering plunder from the countries where he had campaigned; how, when Napoleon fell, she became one of the most feted women of the first Restoration, her house frequented by the Czar, Metternich, and Wellington; how the publication of her memoirs attracted Paris's most brilliant literary figures to her salon; finally how, jilted by the man she hoped to marry, she died alone and penniless.

* * *

THE haunting, legendary "Erica's Return" is as far from the ordinary run of today's fiction as a harpsichord from a juke box. A tenuous fable, most ably translated from the French, of love so strong that it outwits death, it is definitely not for the literal-minded, nor those to whom the whimsical, the fantastic, have no appeal.

Far away in the Flemish countryside, and wrapped in an atmosphere of indefinable serenity and peace, lay the little village of Bourg-en-Pas, most of whose citizens were expert craftsmen, living together in quite unusual amity. Of all the men in the town, quite the handsomest and most respected was Eloi Dullum, a skilled clockmaker, whose beloved young wife had died in giving birth to Erica. Although her mother lay buried in the arboretum-cemetery which was at once the chief ornament and the distinction of Bourg-en-Pas, Erica had been brought up by her father to speak of her as though she were still alive, and, most touchingly, to wear the mother's jewels. The devotion of Eloi Dullum and his blithely beautiful daughter were the admiration of the whole town.

But when suitors inevitably presented themselves for Erica's hand—notably two, one the son of a sober and respected family in the village, the other a member of one of the landed families who lived nearby—Erica, like many another spoiled and petted girl, could not make up her mind. Nor could her father be angry when she begged to stay just a little longer under the roof where she was so happy.

Every winter, after Christmas, the village held a ball-on-ice, on the ornamental lake in the arboretum-cemetery; it was the gala event of the entire year, and Erica promised her father that on that evening she would tell on which lucky young man her choice had fallen. Loving Erica and Eloi so much, all the villagers were interested. When the great night came, however, Erica, the most entrancingly lovely girl at the carnival, gave most of her dances to a mysterious young man, a poorly clad but somehow compellingly romantic stranger who had appeared among the villagers just that evening. At the carnival's end Erica still refused an answer to her two, by now thoroughly impatient, suitors, and even her father's patience was tried.

How Eloi Dullum's love for his daughter triumphed over death, how his fellow villagers humored him in his touching fantasy are told with tenderness and the most subtly evocative imagination. Only a poet and a mystic could so poignantly describe the household which the father's anguished heart has peopled with laughing little Ericas of all ages.

Louise de Vilmorin's novels and poetry have been published in France and in England, but this is her first book to appear in the United States.

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Modern Man's $120,000 Aphrodisiac

THE MIDSUMMER FIRES. By James Aswell. New York: William Morrow & Co. 1948. 311 pp. $3.

Reviewed by HARRY BULL

"APRIL, of course, was the cruelest month." . . . "Lilies were blooming in the Gothic night."

Between these two sentences pass seven days, a half-dozen flashbacks, and 311 pages that hardly help to clarify them. Their passage leaves you unconvinced that Gael Ring, the hero whose specialty is a sort of Varga or Petty-breasted girl spewed out in airbrush for calendars and other commercialized publications, would ever have known so much as the "splinter from Eliot's poem" with which the author launches him into middle age, the period symbolized by the "midsummer fires."

Still boyishly handsome and apparently well bolstered by lush contracts for art work, sycophantic friends, a modern house in the Deep South (Mr. Aswell's capitals), and an adoring wife, Anne, whom he had found a virgin in a night club chorus, Gael Ring suddenly loses the ability to spray any more Ring girls on paper, and with it his only source of income. Recalling the close tie which Edmund Wilson noted between the declining virility of Hemingway's "Men Without Women" and the contemporary financial depression, Ring's sexual potency vanishes with his credit.

Whereupon we are treated to a week of his mental and physical gropings, culminating in a new art manner that brings a $120,000-a-year contract, and, on top of a fine foundation of bourbon, a confident reentry to the marital couch. A psychoanalyst might have taken a year to do as much for him, and two or three to help him mature to a point where Ring's own awareness would have made his story worth reading. But Mr. Aswell, who has the latest popular magazine formula well in hand, has strained himself to give it the pace of James Cain at his most melodramatic, and to spark it with lurid sex psychology. What comes out of the mixer is as naive a concoction as the hero himself.

The one part of the book to carry conviction is a polemic against the hysteria of the Washington military hierarchy, and the contrasting apathy of Ring, who quits it all in the middle of the war to go back to Anne in Louisiana. From this period might have stemmed a gradual awakening of Gael Ring that, in contrast with his surface life, would have precipitated his nervous breakdown and a readable study of another modern American man-child. But in spite of some suggestive insights into the compulsive effects of early images on Ring's behavior, the author is too muddled to distinguish between his hero's experience and his own slightly broader contacts and sympathies, and so to offer the reader a ray of illumination in "the Gothic night."

One cannot, for example, be sure whether the novelist or his leading man is to blame for the statement that "temperance is always either fear or cooling blood," or for belief in the mature wisdom of an old lady who has her New Orleans manse hung with seventy-four portraits of herself and a studio air-conditioned for future sittings.

Full blame, however, must go to Mr. Aswell for the figures of speech that so consistently jar the reader out of any sustained sympathy for his aim, if not his taste, as a writer. Consider "his fingers knew the Braille of her body as the sailor knows a chantey sung seventeen years at sea," "the desperateness of her need ran like Freon in his veins," and "sate small lusts invented in monastic months of nights." These at least are comprehensible. But what is "Thirty-six. A keening age for woman. . . ."? What is a "scubby" face, and how could the General "retain all his hair under a solid, intelligent skull"? And what did the girl do, the "whore-madonna," when she "had cast for him before but had wound in bare lures"?

Although he clearly set out with better intentions, Mr. Aswell has offered us only a comic-strip-tease.

Abject Poverty and Opulent Joy

I CAPTURE THE CASTLE. By Dodie Smith. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1948. 343 pp. $3.

Reviewed by ROBERT HALSBAND

"I WRITE this sitting in the kitchen sink," writes Cassandra Mortmain as the first sentence of her journal. She is its seventeen-year-old heroine, and in its capacious pages she jots down all the observations and palpitations of her adventures as she wanders through a maze of improbable situations inhabited by improbable people and props. Including herself. (As she would write!)

With her family she lives in a ruined castle set in the lovely English countryside. The time is the present, but there is no reference at all to modern conveniences like war and rationing. Her eccentric father is a novelist who had written one famous novel at the beginning of his career and then stopped. Her stepmother, named Topaz, is an exotically beautiful artists' model, addicted to Nature and platitudes. The other inhabitants of the moat-surrounded household are a pretty sister, Rose, a brighter brother, a devoted swain, a cat, a dog, and a dressmaker's dummy, Miss Blossom, who talks to the girls when they need her advice. Since the family has practically no income or negotiable possessions they enjoy the most abject poverty—with the most opulent joy. Their misfortune is the sheerest fun; it enables them to appreciate a biscuit or a cup of cocoa with tremendous zest. When a rich American family moves into a nearby estate, their fortunes change. Mrs. Cotton is a sort of fairy godmother, and among her goodies are two handsome sons, one for Cassandra and one for Rose; and though at first they are mismatched, a little legerdemain — by Dodie Smith — straightens that out at the end. Cassandra's prophecies are occasionally achieved, for her father writes his new masterpiece (which sounds like "Finnegans Wake" simplified), and everybody lives happily ever after, with full stomachs, plenty of towels, and unabated euphoria.

—From "I Capture the Castle."

Dodie Smith, who has turned out fancy confections for the stage, has in this novel whipped up one that is fluffy, digestible, and not very nourishing. It seems not only related by an adolescent but intended for one. Quick, merry, surfacey, lest its reader become restive. Except for a few excursions into farce, the mood is composed of energetic whimsey and of nostalgia for ye olde England. In this setting of a never-never land is enacted a girls' rollicking adventure story. Everything is good fun, mis-

(*Continued on page* 28)

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Personal History. *Three weeks ago the New Deal was dead. Political experts said so, public opinion pollsters said so, Republicans said so, even Democrats—with one or two notable exceptions—admitted it was so. So deeply felt was this conviction that many of the New Deal's chief ornaments, with an alacrity unprecedented in American history, had already rushed into print with revealing and frequently embittered accounts of the behind-the-scenes activity of the supposedly vanished era: Farley, Hull, Perkins, Ickes, Morgenthau, Hopkins, to name only the most prominent. Just before the election, one of the earliest New Deal figures, former Vice President Garner, proffered his recollections, produced with the aid of an amanuensis (see below). November 2 revealed that the New Deal is not quite dead. It will be interesting to see what effect this discovery will have upon our future literary crop.*

One-Dimensional Shot of Cactus Jack

GARNER OF TEXAS. By Bascom N. Timmons. New York: Harper & Bros. 1948. 294 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by ELIOT JANEWAY

AS Texas goes, so goes the South. During the Klan Age, reaction swept some Southern states and never took root in others. The decisive battlefield was Texas, as it still is. For the margin of liberal victory is as narrow today, in Lyndon Johnson's bitter eighty-seven-vote victory over Coke Stephenson, as it was when the Klan was burning fiery crosses in front of Jack Garner's house and carrying Uvalde against him.

It is, of course, a far cry from the time when Garner was a liberal. But under Hoover he stood to the left of Roosevelt. Indeed, it was he and not Roosevelt who served as the fiery spokesman of the popular revolt against orthodoxy after 1929. For a generation he had cultivated the role of official prophet of tomorrow's platitudes. "The time is coming," he had dared to predict in 1906, "when the Federal Treasury will help build good roads." "We will collect an enormous tax from internal earnings, principally income," he predicted again in 1921. "It can be collected in a way to remake our society."

Our society is being remade, the Southern part of it more rapidly than any other. But nothing can remake Jack Garner. In the most enjoyable Bascom Timmons manner, "Garner of Texas" provides a fast and authentic one-dimensional shot of Cactus Jack running like hell while standing still all the way between 1908 and 1948.

Garner started running at the turn of the century. As a junior member of the Legislature, the author reports,

> he asked to be and was made chairman of the committee on redistricting and carved out a district for himself. Then he told his astonished colleagues that the bill he was asking them to pass was framed by him for the express purpose of creating a Congressional district in which he could be elected by Congress. Amazed at the man's frankness, his colleagues gave him the district which sixteen times elected him to Congress. [Garner himself once described it as having more animals than people.]

"I could make money on a rock," Garner once boasted. More remarkable still, he made money playing poker with Uncle Joe Cannon. Their first session produced a showdown. Cannon had three aces but Garner, asking, "Will that be enough, Mr. Speaker?," put down four fours. It was enough to win the freshman from Texas a life membership in the club that runs Congress.

Timmons's repertory of Garnerisms tells the story of Cactus Jack's career in Congress. Thus, as Garner puts it, a Congressman's constituents never tell him: "Just let our interests rock along and go be a national statesman." By 1912, eight years of seniority had put Garner in line for the chairmanship of the Foreign Affairs Committee. But he thought of the job, Timmons reports, in terms of cocktails and canapes, both of which he regarded as works of the devil. "I want to go on a committee," he said, "which deals with domestic affairs affecting the American people."

Garner's technique was to make no campaign speeches. He relied instead on his skill in finagling patronage out of the Republicans, and on his ingenious stand on the tariff—so long as the Republicans demanded protection for woolen manufacturers, he demanded protection for his district's raw wool. Hence, the endless stories, limericks, and epithets about Garner's activity in behalf of the Goat Lobby. "There are about 3,000,000 goats in the United States," complained one Northerner, "of which about 2,999,999 are in Texas"—and, he might have added, Jack Garner ("the patron saint of Angora") spent his career working for each and every one of them.

Between elections Garner got

Jack Garner and FDR—"See how closely we work together." —*Acme.*

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along fine with T. R. And in 1932 it was Garner more than any other man who gave Franklin D. Roosevelt the chance to make history by nominating him. This chapter in Garner's career points still another moral for Democratic politics during the post-Roosevelt period. The South has been trying to split the Democratic Party exactly as it did during the years of disintegration following Wilson. By 1932, however, the pendulum was swinging away from the Republicans, and representative Southerners like Garner were determined to restore party unity. In 1952 the Southerners in control of delegates will again want to win badly enough to agree on a Northern liberal with whom they can win. "All you have to do is stay alive until election day," Garner told Roosevelt after the 1932 convention. "The people are not going to vote for you. They are going to vote against the depression." In 1932 Garner knew better than to stand in their way, and in 1952 his political heirs will be just as practical.

For two terms Roosevelt and Garner dealt with one another at the sword's point. On Inauguration Day, 1937, each man assured the other that he would never run for public office again. Each man probably meant it—in 1937—and each felt wronged three years later when the other began to listen to draft talk. But Garner did not lose his sense of humor during the fight over the third term. When he and Roosevelt came down with toothaches on the same day, he quipped: "See how closely we work together."

In the North and West, voters support leaders in spite of their parties. But in the South, the Democratic Party is supported in spite of its leaders. Garner remained loyal to Roosevelt and to Truman in the same spirit of philosophic resignation with which the venerable headmaster of Groton, Dr. Endicott Peabody, visited Dick Whitney at Sing Sing and Roosevelt at Hyde Park—for all their sins both were old boys of his.

Timmons tries to make a serious point of Garner's objections to Roosevelt's recognition of Russia. But to criticize the book on this level is unfair to it as Americana, which it authentically and entertainingly is.

TB Treat

THE PLAGUE AND I. By Betty MacDonald. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co. 1948. 245 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by STEPHANIE BENÉT

BETTY MACDONALD has done it again. Yes, she has written another extremely funny book—this time about eight and one-half months spent in a TB sanitarium. Certainly, there have been enough books written about tuberculosis and the requisite cure in a sanitarium, but few if any have made the slightest pretense towards amusing the reader. Why should they? TB itself is one of the more drawn-out and depressing of diseases and TB sanitariums are inevitably chill and cheerless spots. A book about the white plague and its cure can generally be found oozing with grimly realistic details. Hardly the kind of thing one settles down to after a long hard day at the office!

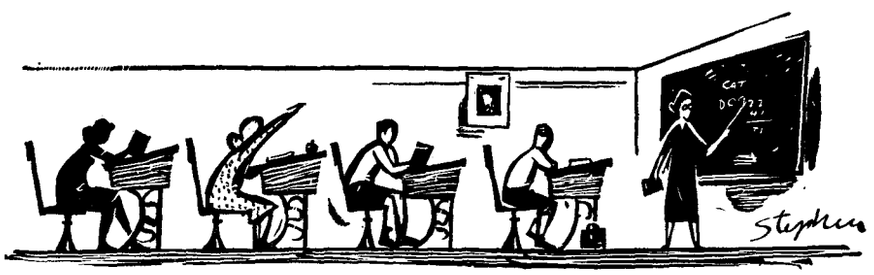
But now along comes Betty MacDonald and gets tuberculosis. As she explains early in "The Plague and I," her mother trained her when young to despise "saddies" (sorry-for-themselves) and to enjoy life no matter what happened—chicken-farming or tuberculosis. This is not to imply that Betty MacDonald is another Pollyanna, the Glad Girl. On the contrary: "People who pack up their troubles in their old kit bag and smiled, smiled, smiled made us want to throw up." No, she is that even rarer human being—one who sees the funny side of everything that happens to her; that rare author—one who can make her experiences equally funny in writing.

Her characterizations, anecdotes, and descriptions of life at the sanitarium ("The Pines") are flawless. Wait until you make the acquaintance of some of her peculiar companions in misery: Kimi, the charming, witty Japanese girl, whose speeches "always sounded as though they should have been on parchment with a spray of cherry blossoms or a single iris painted across one corner"; Eileen, young, rebellious, red-haired, who was prone to shout: "These are my lungs, and if I want to sing with them or talk with them or laugh with them or cough with them, it's nobody's goddam business, but mine—see!" Minna, very blonde, very Southern, very poisonous—"about as complicated emotionally as a bowl of mashed potatoes."

How about the nurses—the angels of mercy supposedly soothing fevered brows continually? Betty nicknamed two—Granite Eyes and Gravy Face—after about twenty-four hours at "The Pines." The following is an accurate description of the majority of the angels of mercy: "Her thick, gray hairy legs looked as if they had been driven into her shoes and when she walked she stamped and the stands and tables jumped around like tiddlywinks." And then there was Miss Gillespie, the occupational therapist who roamed through the O.T. shop shouting, "*Quiet!* Must have quiet! Work, work, no need to talk! Talking is bad for the lungs. Quiet, must have *quiet!*"

And I could go on quoting indefinitely from the phrases, the smiles, the anecdotes, the descriptions that make Betty MacDonald's new work memorable: "The room was again as littered and cozy as an old saloon" or "Inside the conversation flowed around me as warm and comforting as an old sweater" or "Being suddenly thrust with perfect strangers and forced to live with them without any privacy at all for twenty-four-hour period after twenty-four-hour period is as much a problem in adjustment as a planned marriage but without the impetus of curiosity or the surcease of sex." Of course, once you start quoting from "The Plague and I" you are ruined; you can't stop, though that would probably be the best way to review a book by Betty MacDonald. Simply list about ten of your favorite passages and in conclusion state: "I thought these were funny—read this book if you agree." However, I can't conceive of anyone not enjoying the latest MacDonald masterpiece of entertainment. If you have any sense of humor at all—even if you haven't—you will laugh and laugh and laugh. About halfway through the book you will start to read more slowly, as you will begin to realize you must eventually finish. (This thought will seem almost unbearable.)

If you read "The Plague and I," I can promise you, you will enjoy yourself. Read it any time in any place. Perhaps that should be modified slightly. Reading this book in a public place such as the subway means having people stare at you curiously as you laugh out loud. Yes, indeed, Betty MacDonald has done it again.



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Fish Fan

OLD MR. FLOOD. By Joseph Mitchell. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, Inc. 1948. 111 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by HORACE SUTTON

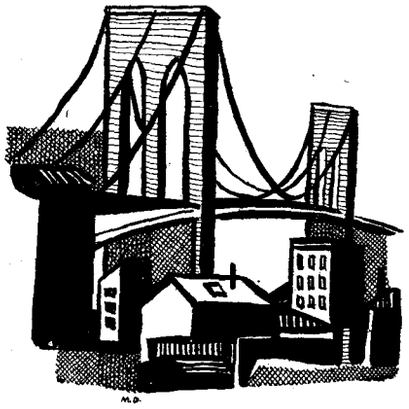
NEVER let it be said that Mr. Joseph Mitchell is a social climber, that he hobnobs with the aristocracy, rubs elbows with mink. First he spent ten or more nights in a barroom and came up with a fine book called "McSorley's Wonderful Saloon." I was in McSorley's Old Ale House on East Seventh Street once and, believe me, I'm glad I got back uptown with my whole hide.

And just where do you think Mr. Mitchell has been spending his time lately? Down, if you please, at the Fulton Fish Market, New York's original Aroma Corner. Somewhere amid the shad and the haddock, Mr. Mitchell has turned up a character name of Hugh G. Flood, a retired housewrecker of ninety-three years and some means. Mr. Flood's object in life is to live to be 115, and, as you can see, he has a few to go. He plans to make the grade by maintaining a strict diet of fish—sea urchins, blowfish tails, winkles, ink squids, and bardnoor skates. Whereas you or I might knock off a stack of wheat cakes, Mr. Flood's breakfasts are apt to consist of fried cod tongues, cheeks, and sounds. Sounds, Mr. Mitchell informs us, are gelatinous air bladders along the cod's backbone. I wish he hadn't.

Old Mr. Flood lives in the Hartford House, a waterfront hotel where his room, by personal choice, is decorated with signs issued by the Fishery Council reading, "Fresh Mackerel Is in Season at a Cost Within Reason." He takes most of his meals at Sloppy Louie Morino's, a place on South Street catering largely to wholesale fishmongers. He likes Louie's best because the cook is an old Genoese. Next to old Italians, Mr. Flood thinks the best fish cooks are "old colored men, then old mean Yankees, then old drunk Irishmen. . . . If the cook is an awful drunk so much the better. . ."

So far, Mr. Flood's dietetic system for longevity is paying off. He hasn't had a cold since 1912, and he has a fairly valid excuse for catching that one:

> I went on a toot and it was a pouring-down rainy night in the dead of winter and my shoes were cracked and they let the damp in and I lost my balance a time or two and sloshed around in the gutter and somewhere along the line I mislaid my hat and I'd just had a haircut and I stood in a draft in one saloon an hour or more and there was a poor fellow next to me sneezing his head off and when I got home I crawled into a bed that was beside an open window like a fool and passed out with my wet clothes on, and besides . . .



With his character and purpose thus firmly established, Mr. Mitchell takes his Mr. Flood through a number of typical day-to-day adventures with his friends in the fish market. There is Mrs. Birdie Treppel, the fish wife who is always cold and always talking about it:

> . . . if you went up to the North Pole in the dead of December and stripped to the drawers and picked out the biggest iceberg and dug a hole right down to the heart of it . . . and crawled in . . . and put a handful of snow under each arm and et a dish of ice cream why, you wouldn't be near as cold. . . .

Then there is the Savannah Negro, Mr. Ah Got Um, who walks through the fish stalls chanting, "Ah got pompanos! Ah got buffaloes! Ah got these! Ah got those! . . ." There is Mr. Murchison, who calls gourmets "goormys" and bouillabaisse "booly-booze" and likes neither. And Matthew T. Cusack (Old Drop-Dead Matty), retired New York cop, now watchman for the Fulton Market Fishmongers Association. There is also Mr. Joseph Mitchell, who sits by quietly and faithfully photographs the wonderful words of his characters without ever getting his own thumb in the lens.

"Old Mr. Flood" originally appeared as a three-part *New Yorker* Profile, and my only complaint is that some of the explanations which were repeated for continuity in the magazine series might have been edited out of the book. It is, really, a very short work, and you will, I'm sure, find yourself wishing there were more. Mr. Mitchell has written with such a pungency that you'll probably find the flavor of the Fulton Fish Market hanging over the house for a couple of days. Of course, that's nothing that a stiff control of your extrasensory perceptions and a fresh Air Wick can't cure.

Man Farthest Down

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON: A BIOGRAPHY. By Basil Matthews. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1948. 350 *pp.* $4.75.

Reviewed by H. A. OVERSTREET.

IT is high time that this book should have been written; and it is particularly fortunate that it should have been written so superbly. Controversy has grown tense around the name of Booker Washington; and the image of that great man has been not only dimmed but confused. Many a well-wisher of the Negro has been led to feel that there was something inexcusably slavish about Booker Washington's compromises with the white South. He should, so the argument has run, have made an all-out fight, on principle, for the complete equality of his people rather than accept a grudging support for his educational work at the cost of segregation and second-grade citizenship.

We have needed to have the whole issue clarified: first, for the sake of the memory of a very great man; second, for the sake of closing the ranks of all friends of the Negro and of Negroes themselves. This book, through its vivid portrayal of the almost unbelievable life of a genius of the human race, and through its sober balancing of the pros and cons in the controversy, should help to achieve these ends.

In a finely balanced chapter entitled "The Continuing Debate" the author quotes a number of statements made long after the bitterest phases of the controversy were over. Among them are these words of Roy Walker, editor of *Crisis*, written in 1944:

> It was inevitable that there should emerge, as the Negro made progress, a group that felt that the time had come for bolder words and more direct steps toward the goal. . . . If it seemed in the past that certain segments have demanded less than complete equality, there is considerable evidence . . . that Booker Washington . . . carelessly nominated as the "half-loaf" leader, envisioned complete equality for his people. A shrewd man, thoroughly in tune with his time, he *appeared* to be an appeaser and did his great work under that protective cloak.

The present volume tells three major stories: first, the amazing story of this Negro, who, born in a slave's cabin, mounted to dizzy heights of world fame; second, the equally amazing story of the building, out of little more than a few grudging dollars voted by a state legislature and an unbeatable conviction, of one of the great educational institutions

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of the world; third, the story of European tours undertaken in the days of worldwide fame, in which Booker Washington's eyes turned searchingly, not to museums, cathedrals, and castles, but to the "man farthest down," the long-suffering European peasant.

Through all these stories there runs a persistent conviction: the man farthest down must be helped to rise by the disciplining of his own powers. Booker Washington asked this for his own people; he asked it for all the oppressed people of the world. He was wise in seeing that for a people just emerged from slavery the first of all disciplines must be that of manual competence; second, that of ownership. To this discipline of the brain through the hand and of the citizen through ownership he devoted his educational genius. In the process, he built an educational institution that served not only to win a second emancipation for uncounted numbers of his people but brought to the schools and colleges of white America a new sense of how to educate young people through the instructed hand and the socialized brain.

At the time of Booker Washington's death, Burghardt DuBois, one of his bitterest critics, wrote this tribute: "He was the greatest Negro leader since Frederick Douglass and the most distinguished man, white or black, who has come out of the South since the Civil War." And Oswald Villard, grandson of the great Abolitionist, wrote: "The Abolitionists would have rejoiced in him—would have found him a kindred soul, so bent on his own work as to have lost all thought of personality in his devotion to his cause."

This is a vivid and revealing book about one of the greatest of our fellow-men.

Medicine. *If American parents were permitted to choose their sons' occupations for them, it was disclosed in a survey made a few years ago, they would give the practice of medicine first place by a wide margin. Yet, curiously enough, in Western civilization medicine is one of the newest disciplines to attain the dignity of a learned profession. The secure respect which the average American today feels for the medical doctor was won during the last century and a half by such practitioners and institutions as those treated in Bertram M. Bernheim's "Story of the Johns Hopkins" reviewed below.*

Created by Hippocratic Giants

THE STORY OF THE JOHNS HOPKINS. By Bertram M. Bernheim, M. D. New York: Whittlesey House. 1948. 235 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by
THEODORE M. SANDERS, M.D.

IN the great hall of the Welch Memorial Library in Baltimore hangs a painting by John Singer Sargent which has a meaning for American physicians and medical students akin to the "Spirit of '76" for American school children. Although there is nothing martial in the Sargent painting, the four figures in it have a kind of revolutionary gallantry. Certainly they are already, in a sense, the folklore heroes of modern American medicine: Welch, Osler, Halsted, and Kelly—creators of the Johns Hopkins Medical School and Hospital.

It is essentially their story which Dr. Bernheim tells, although his pages are also studded with the names of the other towering figures in American medicine who followed in the founders' path. Indeed, an essential factor in their achievement was that vital ingredient of leadership—the magic which discovers, attracts, and inspires other men of talent. All four were endowed, in varying degrees, with this magnetism.

Legendary, for example, was that brilliant pathologist and super-salesman "Popsy" Welch, bachelor, bon vivant who extracted millions of dollars for research purposes from his hosts, supervised a huge and growing institution, managed to dart down to Washington periodically to talk Congress out of anti-vivisection legislation and, in the course of a jaunt to Europe, blandly overspent the Hopkins budget for scientific foreign books by some $95,000, which he effortlessly raised immediately upon his return.

Widest in influence, perhaps, was "the Chief," Osler, whose "Practice of Medicine" is the new testament in every medical student's bible as "Gray's Anatomy" is the old testament. In Dr. Bernheim's book, one meets not only Osler, the great clinician, but also the great educator who knew a truth sometimes forgotten by modern pedagogues—that learning is an experience between teacher and pupil. Osler's students learned not only from his brilliant discourses in wards and classrooms but also from the famous and frequent evening sessions at his home. Most favored of his disciples were Hopkins residents, who lived next door and had keys to the Osler house, which they invaded at will. Cushing, Futcher, McCrea, and Jacobs are just a few of the now celebrated "latch-keyers," whose subsequent careers attest the worth of close association and friendship with a great teacher for the young professional man of talent.

There was individuality, wide personal divergence, and even eccentricity among the great four. Howard Kelly, whose innovations are a major heritage of modern gynecology, was a man of such devoutness that he led his staff in prayer or read a passage from the Bible before every operation. Philosopher of the Hopkins group was Halsted, shy, solemn, always perhaps somewhat under the shadow of a youthful tragedy. It was Halsted, who, in his early days on the staff of Bellevue in New York, experimented with the use of cocaine, became a habitue himself. Rescued by Welch, Halsted was cured completely of his addiction, became Hopkins's great and creative professor of surgery.

Dr. Bernheim was himself a member of the remarkable Hopkins group of which he writes; he has been associated with the institution as student and teacher for almost forty years. Of the many innovations he describes which contributed to the rise of Hopkins, one of the most significant was surely its employment of full-time salaried professors who were able to concentrate all their efforts on the

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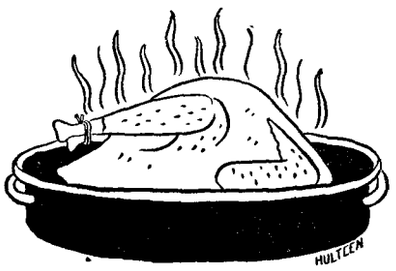
building of a great institution at a time when most medical schools were staffed entirely by physicians who had to divide their energies between teaching and eking a living out of their own practices. Another major factor in raising the level of medical competence, particularly in the specialties, has been the Hopkins system of residencies. A temporary appointment for a year or two for promising interns at most hospitals, a residency at Hopkins is a quasi-permanent post. The qualified incumbent may stay on for years, ultimately winning either a promotion at Hopkins or a teaching post at another institution. Thus his entire professional career is an opportunity for continuous scientific growth, surrounded by the research resources of the hospital, rather than the uneven and sometimes makeshift development inevitable in private practice. For the flowering of specialized talent it is certainly an ideal method of nurture, although its products seem at times to partake of somewhat orchidaceous characteristics to their earthier colleagues.

Dr. Bernheim is by no means unaware of such minor imperfections in the Hopkins picture. His approach is critical, not worshipful, and if he finds much to praise, few can challenge the true excellence of his subject matter. The book is replete not only with sound exposition of a great chapter in American medicine but with a wealth of diverting sidelights. Dr. Bernheim has even devoted a chatty chapter to the institution's first financial angel, whose given-name really was Johns. A perfect character in this somehow fabulous tale, in which all the leading figures seem a little larger than life-size, is crotchety old Johns Hopkins, who made a fortune in groceries and fell in love with his cousin Elizabeth. Parental taboos on the question of consanguinity prevented the marriage. But Elizabeth remained a major influence in her cousin's life and it was she, according to legend, who fought the initial skirmishes in the battle later waged successfully by the Hopkins doctors to capture the grocers' millions for medical science. It was Elizabeth, too, together with some philanthropic Baltimore female millionaires who insisted that Hopkins offer equal opportunities to women medical students and physicians. An impressive memorial in recent years to this daring policy, not yet adopted by some of our major medical schools, is the work of Hopkins's Dr. Helen Taussig, who, with Dr. Blalock, developed the life-saving "blue-baby" operation for infants born with congenital heart disease.

The influence of Hopkins on American medicine has been enormous. Today, in fact, it no longer stands out as the Mt. Everest of our medical world. It is approximately on the same plateau of excellence to which our major centers have been raised, in large part through the example and leadership of Hopkins and those who have gone out from it. Whether it will again rise from the plateau to a new conspicuous eminence—above Columbia, Harvard, Cornell, Pennsylvania, and Michigan—depends on the new generation upon whom the mantles of the great founders now rest. For, as Dr. Bernheim so lucidly points out, a great institution is a good deal more than plans—and buildings and money. It is a creation of great men. There were giants in medicine in Baltimore sixty years ago. Whether we have them today remains to be seen.



Dr. Theodore M. Sanders, an internist, is an attending physician at the Beth David, Lenox Hill, and Gouveneur hospitals in New York City.

Your Literary I.Q.

By Howard Collins

SONGS FROM SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS

Augusta Morgan, of West Virginia University, asks you to identify the Shakespearean plays in which the following songs appear. Allowing five points for each correct answer, a score of sixty is par, seventy is very good, and eighty or better is excellent. Answers on page 34.

1. When icicles hang by the wall,
   And Dick the shepherd blows his nail.
2. Who is Sylvia? What is she,
   That all our swains commend her?
3. Tell me, where is fancy bred,
   Or in the heart, or in the head?
4. Under the greenwood tree,
   Who loves to lie with me.
5. O, mistress mine, where are you roaming?
   O stay and hear; your true love's coming.
6. Take, oh, take those lips away,
   That so sweetly were forsworn.
7. It was a lover and his lass,
   With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino.
8. Hark, hark! the lark at heaven's gate swings,
   And Phoebus 'gins arise.
9. Full fathom five thy father lies:
   Of his bone are coral made.
10. Fear no more the heat o' the sun,
    Nor the furious winter's rages.
11. Where the bee sucks, there suck I:
    In a cowslip's bell I lie.
12. Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more,
    Men were deceivers ever.
13. Philomel, with melody,
    Sing in our sweet lullaby;
    Lulla, lulla, lullaby; lulla, lulla, lullaby.
14. When daffodils begin to peer,
    With heigh! the doxy, over the dale.
15. Come unto these yellow sands,
    And then take hands.
16. Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
    Thou are not so unkind
    As man's ingratitude.
17. I must go seek some dew-drops here,
    And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.
18. Jog on, jog on the foot-path way, and merrily hent the stile-a;
    A merry heart goes all the day, your sad tires in a mile-a.
19. When that I was and a little tiny boy,
    With hey, ho, the wind and the rain.
20. On a day, alack the day! Love, whose month is ever May,
    Spied a blossom passing fair playing in the wanton air.

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ENTRY RULES

1. Editorials must appear in an English-language daily newspaper within the territorial limits of the United States during the calendar year 1948.

2. Entries must be postmarked not later than midnight, January 31, 1949.

3. Entries must be submitted in the form of clippings from the editorial columns of the newspaper.

4. Entries should be made by the publisher of the newspaper in which the editorial appears, or by the writer, and should show the name and address of the publisher and the writer, the date of publication, and should indicate whether circulation is greater or less than 50,000.

5. There is no limit to the number of editorials which may be submitted by one newspaper or one writer. There is no minimum or maximum length requirement for entries.

6. All entries must be mailed to:
JUDGING COMMITTEE, EDITORIAL AWARD,
UNITED STATES ASSOCIATES,
20 EAST 57TH STREET,
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7. The decisions of the judges will be final.

United States Associates

International Chamber of Commerce, Incorporated

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The Saturday Review of Literature

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"...But He's an American"

NEAR Paris, in a small cottage on the banks of the Marne, I listened while my host, a French university professor, tried to answer the probing questions of an eleven-year-old nephew.

"Aren't American people better than French people?" young Paul wanted to know.

"The Americans themselves wouldn't like to hear anyone ask that question," the uncle said. "They very rightly believe that they are as good as any other people, but would never claim that they are better—just as they would dislike hearing other people claim they were better."

Paul looked puzzled. "Well, Uncle Robert," he asked, his eyes fastened on me, "don't French people *think* the Americans are better?"

"I never heard any Frenchman say that. Did you? Why do you ask?"

"Well, Uncle Robert, if they aren't any better than we are, why can they get so many things in Paris that French people are not allowed to get?"

Uncle Robert coughed uneasily, and I began to wilt under Paul's penetrating gaze. There was nothing hostile about it; he was studying me with the direct and intense objectivity of a boy examining a captured grasshopper in an effort to find the hidden springs.

Before Uncle Robert could come up with a plausible answer, Paul was pressing the point.

"Can Americans get as much gasoline as they want?"

"Well, not exactly. They can get 200 gallons a month."

"And how much can we get, Uncle Robert?"

"Five gallons a month."

"What happens if an American uses up his 200 gallons before the month is over and needs more?"

"Well, I suppose he can get more by applying for it."

"Can a Frenchman get another five gallons by applying for it?"

"Not for pleasure driving, Paul, but if he has a business and really needs his car, the Government will probably let him have enough gasoline to keep his business going."

"But aren't Americans using their gasoline for pleasure driving? And what happens if Americans who don't drive decide to sell their gasoline coupons? Or maybe cigarettes? Or soap? Is that why it is so hard to get rid of the black market? Would they arrest Americans who sell on the black market?"

Uncle Robert smiled benevolently but the smile was far from voluntary and had to be conscripted and mobilized before it would serve.

"Son," he said, after some hesitation, "you've got to remember that Americans are our guests and that it is our duty to see that they are treated properly. A good host will deprive himself of his own food in order to feed his guests."

"Is that why we never get any meat or butter or sugar, Uncle Robert? Are we giving it all to the Americans? Can an American get meat in Paris whenever he wants it?"

"Yes, but—"

"Can he have ham with eggs at breakfast and veal with noodles at lunch and roast pork with squash at dinner—just like we used to have when I was a small boy?"

Then, without waiting for an answer and looking squarely at me: "What did *you* have for breakfast this morning, *Mistaire Koo-zahns*?"

"Well, Paul, I did have some bacon with my eggs," I said guiltily.

"What else did you have?"

I swallowed hard. "Let's see," I said, fighting for time, "I'm not sure I remember, but I— I— er— well, Paul" (I was trapped and decided I might just as well give him a straight answer)—"I had a large orange juice to start with, and then some hot oatmeal with honey, and, after the bacon and eggs, some coffee with cream and sugar, and some toast with butter and marmalade."

Robert's eyes opened out like parachutes in a stiff wind. "Orange juice! Honey! Butter! Sugar! You are not joking?"

"No, Paul, I am not joking."

"But maybe then you are sick and you have a doctor's certificate which tells the Government to feed you just like you needed medicine, no?"

Uncle Robert cut in. "Paul," he said, "Mr. Cousins is not sick and he doesn't have a doctor's certificate, but he is an American and Americans are encouraged to eat well here and rent cars and use gas and buy clothes that Frenchmen cannot get. I know it doesn't sound right, but it really helps France when Americans come here and buy all these things."

Paul tried to be patient while his uncle spoke, but I could tell that a storm was boiling up inside him.

"Everyone is fooling me," he erupted. "No one will answer my questions right. First you tell me that French people do not have enough of the things they need, like meat and eggs and butter, and then you tell me that it helps France if we give these things to the Americans. Don't Americans have enough to eat in America? Do they come over here because there isn't enough at home? And if they haven't enough in America for themselves, do they also ask Frenchmen to come over there and eat up what little food they have?"

PAUL was firing away like a nest of machine guns. Uncle Robert looked over at me; his earlier embarrassment at seeing me put on the spot had given way by now to a feeling of complete despair. But he decided to give it another try.

"Now Paul, those are very good questions and I agree with you that my answers aren't making much sense, and I see what you mean when you say you think I am fooling. But I am not fooling. I am telling you truthfully why these things are as they are or, at least, what the Government says they are."

This had the effect of calming Paul down a bit. Uncle Robert took a deep breath and pressed his momentary opening.

"What it comes down to is this," he said. "France has no money. France lost almost everything she had in the war—most of her factories, much of her land, many of her men. Paris was saved but much of Eastern France was wrecked, and it will take time to rebuild. At the end of the war, France could not buy the things she needed to start up her industries again. Her paper money was not backed by enough gold or silver. There were great scarcities. There were . . ."

Paul interrupted and shot a question at me. "But was not America poor at the end of the war, too?"

"No, Paul," I said, "America was not poor. America was not invaded and her cities were not smashed. America was actually richer at the end of the war because all her industries and many new ones were in full operation and the people had more

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money than ever before to buy many new things. And American money was about as good as it ever was. Of course, a dollar could buy maybe about one-half or even three-fourths of what it did before the war, but that is as nothing compared to France, where it takes maybe sixty francs to do the work of one franc only ten years ago."

UNCLE ROBERT picked up the argument at this point.

"And because America is so rich and the rest of the world is so poor, the only currency in the world today that everybody wants is American dollars. Everyone knows that the dollar has a high value, and nations all all over the world want to be paid in dollars because they don't quite trust their own currency and because they can buy much more with dollars.

"That is why France is anxious to have Americans come here. Americans can buy anything they want if they spend dollars for it. They can buy steaks, butter, oranges, sweet cream, fancy clothing. The more dollars they spend, the more dollars France will have to rebuild her economy again."

For a while, it looked as though Paul were digesting the argument. But then his face became screwed up again in a question mark.

"I don't understand," he said slowly. "If Americans don't think they are better than anyone else, and if they are a democracy, and if they really want to help us, why don't they just stay home and send us their dollars? If they are really our friends, why do they make us give them the things we need so badly before they will give us their dollars? And why wouldn't it be better yet if they kept the dollars in America and sent us some food, if they have so much of it. *Mistaire Koo-zahns*, can I see one of your dollars, please?"

Thus commanded, I timidly reached into my pocket and handed Paul a somewhat battered dollar bill.

"It is just paper," he said, scrutinizing it carefully. "It is thicker paper than the franc, but it is paper just the same. The French people, we are very stupid to get down on our hands and knees like we are doing for paper dollars. We should be too proud to do what we are doing. If there is a law which says that there is too little meat in France and that everyone can have only so much, then we shouldn't make exceptions for anyone, not even Americans just because they are rich. And why should Americans have orange juice and sugar and butter for breakfast just because they have these paper dollars while French children need the food much more but cannot get it because there is a law?"

"Paul!" his uncle broke in sternly, "Mr. Cousins was a guest of university friends of mine for breakfast and they arranged the menu. Besides, it is bad manners for you to regard this as a personal matter."

"Please let him go on," I said. "He is making an excellent point."

"Well, I didn't mean *Mistaire Koo-zahns* only," Paul said apologetically. "What I mean is that it is all wrong to make these paper dollars more important than anything else. If we go in the kitchen now and put this paper dollar next to a potato in the oven to cook, in a little while you would have a potato you could eat but you wouldn't even be able to find the paper."

"I should have known this was coming," Uncle Robert said. "And I'm not going to try to explain exactly what money is and how it works except to say, Paul, that one of those little pieces of paper can buy enough potatoes for a single year—and don't ask me why that should be so; I'm only telling you that it is so.

"But if you want to know what France is doing to get out of her present predicament about the dollar shortage, and not a lesson on how money works and why it is needed, then I'll be glad to try to answer some of your earlier questions.

"Now, first of all, you were wrong in saying that America isn't our friend or isn't sending us dollars without expecting something in return. The American foreign minister has a plan to help all the countries of Europe: the United States will advance us money to buy the things we need—plant equipment and grain and wheat and housing materials. Billions of dollars are being put into this plan, and America is getting very little in return."

Paul was hearing about the Marshall Plan for the first time. He leaned forward in his chair, his chin buried deep in both fists, listening intently as Uncle Robert went on to explain the way the Marshall Plan operated, how it was designed to prime the pump for all the nations of Europe, and how it represented a source of great hope for many millions of people.

"This is a great thing the American Government is doing," Paul said, obviously deeply impressed. "But why don't Americans behave as nicely as the American Government?"

"What do you mean, Paul?" I asked.

"I mean why do Americans come to Paris to buy the things we need and that they don't need, if France is being given the dollars by the American Government? If the American Government understands how much France needs help, shouldn't America ask her citizens not to expect better treatment in any country than the people of that country get?"

Uncle Robert looked over at me. "I guess you had better take it from here," he said.

I WAS thinking, while Paul spoke, that all over Europe young people were probably bewildering their parents with similar questions, and were being left unsatisfied with the answers. I was thinking about Americans in Europe in 1948 and of the extraordinary value that had been placed on American cigarettes, for example, and how Americans were not oblivious of the leverage they could exert with a few cigarettes—how in London the waiters' eyes would almost pop out and then narrow into slits as they observed Americans puff once or twice on a cigarette and then crush it; how in Berlin Americans could buy cigarettes for nine cents a pack at the Army post exchange and barter it for German items costing up to five dollars, and how it was customary, after a big meal in Germany, to leave the munificent tip of two cigarettes—less than one cent in actual cost to Americans; how in Milan, in a leather-goods store I happened to visit, the proprietor left an Italian customer to wait on an American—because Americans come first in Europe. . . .

I was thinking, too, that by far the majority of Americans traveling abroad were aware of the responsibilities of wealth and power and were

(*Continued on page 37*)

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Revolutionary Concept

SIR: "The Scientific Production of Love" by John Wharton [*SRL* Oct. 30] besides displaying to advantage his fine capabilities as a reporter touches the edges at least of as forward-looking and revolutionary a concept of human behavior as has appeared in print for a long while. I mentally shake his hand and wish him the widest and most receptive audience possible. The advantage of such new stuff as his is not sufficiently appreciated. Even if, later on, it develops that much of it may have been known long since in other language, the new terminology, like a coat of paint, protects against the decays and weathering of time, and keeps that serviceable which otherwise might become a rotted and useless obstruction and eyesore in the path of human progress.

WILLIAM S. MAXWELL.

Philadelphia, Pa.

SIR: John F. Wharton's article is totally misleading because it gives the impression that psychiatric diagnosis can be made by electroencephalography, which he labels "brain cardiograph." It is apparent that Mr. Wharton failed to go into the science of electroencephalography, which is an established technique in most medical centers for the diagnosis of physical brain disorders such as brain tumors or epilepsy.

So far, there is no basis for the belief that the electrical brain waves in emotional or psychiatric disorders are any different from the normal. Research on insane and neurotic patients has shown the same percentage of normal records as among normal controls.

The brain waves in normal individuals are affected by closing the eyes, and even by concentration on visual scenes or mathematical sums while the eyes are closed. They are also affected by flashing lights and deep breathing.

Without discussing the theory that Mr. Wharton propounds, it is necessary to challenge the statements he makes about the Vittoz machine, since the synonymous electroencephalograph deals with purely physical phenomena.

JOYCE WAKSMAN.

New York, N. Y.

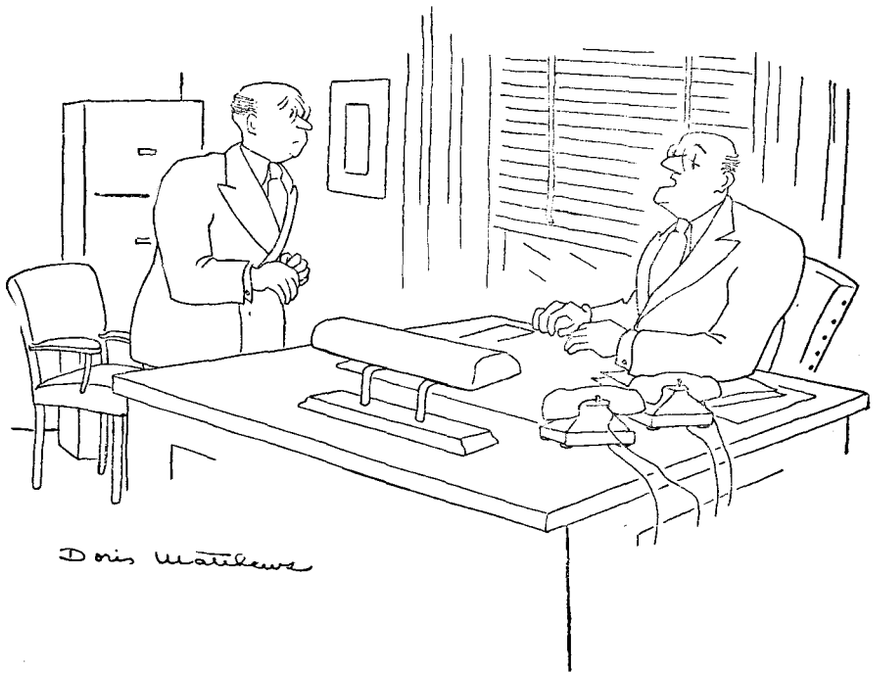
Censorship Protest

SIR: The U.S. Supreme Court decision supporting the New York ban on Edmund Wilson's "Memoirs of Hecate County" has grave implications. If men and women have lived as the characters in Mr. Wilson's book, then it is providing us not only with *truthful* observations, but sociological, and even historical, insight as well. I am inclined to believe that there is substantial truth in this book.

Assuming the accuracy of the stories, we who are loyal to truth must rightfully protest that American governmental agencies are coercively concealing actual, legal phenomena because these do not have a moral tone. Moreover, significant governmental agencies are censoring literature and, by implication, warning authors to avoid reporting on basic, common events in our society.

JACOB H. JAFFE.

New York, N. Y.



"In view of the rising cost of living, Brown, I'm afraid we'll have to ask you to take a cut in salary."

"An Apology for Living"

SIR: During the last two years you have published a number of brilliant editorials and articles which, while excelling in literary quality, were animated by those considerations of humanity which lend to literature more than the usual artistic or esthetic value.

I often wanted to write and congratulate you, but if I have restrained my enthusiasm on previous occasions, I am unable to do so now after you have published "An Apology for Living" [*SRL* Oct. 9]. So I send this word to congratulate you and to thank you for this impressive presentation of at least one aspect of an appalling and obscured tragedy which is fast being forgotten.

BERNARD G. RICHARDS.

New York, N. Y.

Nobody Named Shakespeare

SIR: The "Edward De Vere-wrote-the-plays-of-Shakespeare" fantasiasts tell us that as a nobleman De Vere could not without serious loss of prestige allow his name to be linked with anything as unsavory as the theatre. He therefore hired a nobody named William Shakespeare to shoulder the blame of authorship.

Let us test this wholly gratuitous assumption with a few facts. Fact one: Whoever wrote the plays also wrote the two narrative poems and the sonnets. No one with a grain of sense could pretend otherwise. Fact two: No stigma attached to writing poetry. It was the accepted thing for noblemen to do and Edward De Vere wrote poetry and had it published over his own name. Fact three: As a poet he would have known that any name attached to anyone of the famous Shakespearian poems was assured of immortality.

Yet say the De Verists, though he had no motive at all for doing so, and every motive of pride for *not* doing so, he turned over these masterpieces to an obscure nobody and renounced immortal fame for comparative oblivion. They may be able to swallow this. No one else could possibly.

G. R. GARRETT.

New York, N. Y.

Ooooo! La! La!

SIR: Ooooo! la! la! I loved the article "The Blonde Who Could Whistle Bird Calls" in *SRL's* BOOKED FOR TRAVEL, Oct. 16. I'm sorry I was not in Paris, but it's too late now, I guess—besides, I don't have green eyes. I'll answer for the rest though —I am a blonde who can whistle bird calls.

MARY WYMER BANISTER.
Artist Whistler.

Tulsa, Okla.

Werewolf?

SIR: Look again at your cover for Oct. 23! Does Hal McIntosh hold a grudge against Franklin Roosevelt? He has transformed him from statesman to werewolf.

WILLIAM J. SHORROCK.

Washington, D. C.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Mr. McIntosh is a Canadian and, as far as we know, without grudge.*

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Seeing Things

HAPPY DAYS HERE AGAIN

THE Days are "at home" again at the Empire. Considering Clarence Senior's allergy to guests, this may, as social news, be slightly terrifying. As theatrical news, it is very pleasant indeed. The Days have long since ceased to be a family and become a national institution. That is perhaps why, in their case, a sequel to "Life with Father" was inevitable.

Sequels, as a rule, are damned things. They come as anticlimaxes. Usually they are warmed-overs, served cold. They refuse to admit that the clock has struck. They resemble those well-meaning people who, being unblessed with terminal facilities, often ruin what has been a good evening by staying on after they have said goodnight. "Life with Mother"* is different. It proves the Days have not outstayed their welcome. It gives every indication of having triumphed over the jinx of sequels, as surely as Mr. Roosevelt overrode the popular prejudice against a third term.

This time, though Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse rely as dramatists on Clarence Day's sketches for incidents, they do the major work themselves. They supply the Days with dialogue of their own invention. They even dare to introduce the Days and us to some hilarious characters that there is no record of Father having known. Yet dramatically the result is much the same. It may be a little broader in mood and manner, but certainly in intention and effect it is identical with their earlier play. That is why it is so welcome.

Was Father's resistance to baptism the plot, if plot it can be called, of "Life with Father"? Well, Vinnie's determination, after years of married life, to get for herself the engagement ring that Father failed to give her is, I suppose, the plot of "Life with Mother." At least it supplies a very agreeable evening with a story which, however frail, is sufficient to keep things moving.

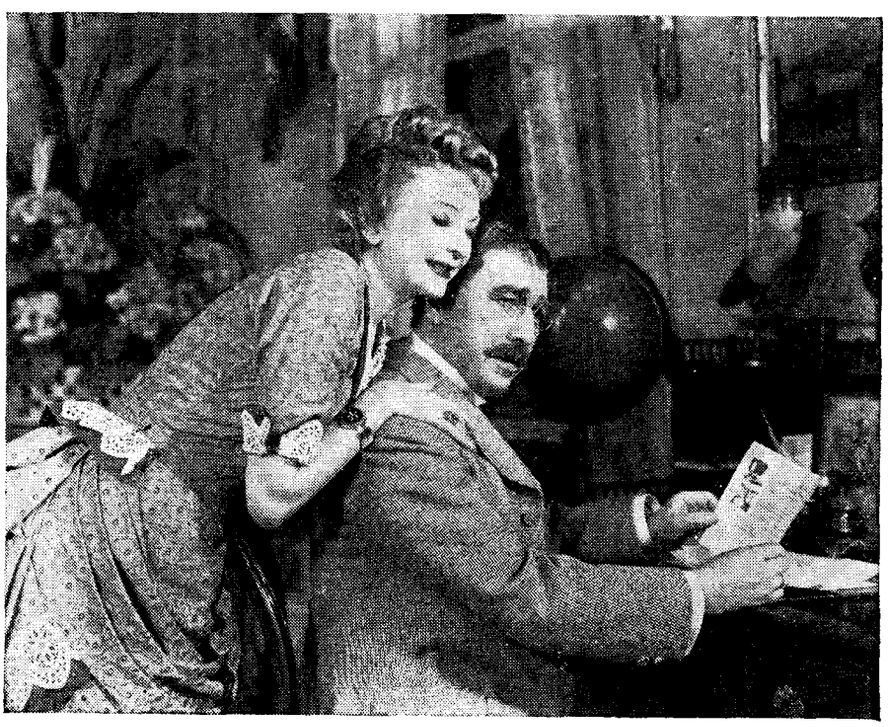
The real plot lies elsewhere and is sizable enough to rank as a conspiracy. It is a conspiracy, amiable but triumphant, to make all members of all ages in all audiences recognize their own family life in the home life of the Days. So successful are Mr. Lindsay and Mr. Crouse in bringing this about that no one normally accouched can resist their efforts and only the test-tube progeny in Mr. Huxley's "Brave New World" would have a chance of doing so.

When "Life with Father" was new, hence when all of us were a decade younger and considerably newer ourselves, I tried to point out the inevitable, and doubtless wise, changes which had occurred in the process of bringing Clarence Day's family papers to the stage. These changes involved a shift in emphasis rather than an alteration of details. The Day family behind the footlights had ceased to be the personal property of Clarence Junior. It had not only lost the special breeding which distinguished it but no longer seemed as securely anchored in a period as it once did. It had become everybody's family which, theatrically, was a strategy both canny and necessary.

The difference was that, instead of our saying, "How like the Days our families are!," as we had said when we read "Life with Father," we were as theatregoers apt to say, "How like our families were the Days!" In this manner the circle of the ripple of application had been widened and the inclusive parentheses extended. In fashioning "Life with Mother" Mr. Lindsay and Mr. Crouse have employed the same tactics. Their comedy, though concerned with the carrot-domed Days, is once again a carry-all for experiences common to all family living. The mirror it holds up to home life is so large that few people can fail to get a glimpse of themselves in it.

There is Harlan, for example. He is anyone's young son who memorizes new poems and insists upon reciting them at unpredictable and inappropriate moments in spite of such parental warnings as, "Not now—later." Then there is Clarence Junior, the eternal collegian, who delights his mother and horrifies his father by becoming engaged. There is the pathos of saying goodbye to sons as they go away to school. There is Father's forgotten fiancée, too, a tiresomely jolly woman now grown so plump and bouncy that Mother takes a human, if un-Christian, pleasure in seeing her.

THERE are also the contraband house guests who are smuggled in without Father's knowing it at what,



—*Vandamm.*

". . . few people can fail to get a glimpse of themselves."

* *LIFE WITH MOTHER, by Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse. Based on Clarence Day's sketches. Directed by Guthrie McClintic. First and second act setting and costumes by Donald Oenslager. Third act setting by Stewart Chaney. Presented by Oscar Serlin. With Dorothy Stickney, Howard Lindsay, John Drew Devereaux, David Frank, Robert Antoine, Robert Wade, Gladys Hurlbut, Robert Emhardt, Ruth Hammond, A. H. Van Buren, Dorothy Bernard, Jo Anne Paul, Amy Douglass, Mary Diveny, Marguerite Morrissey, and Michael Smith. At the Empire. Opened October 20, 1948.*

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for Father, always proves to be the wrong time. Moreover, there are the ever-recurring matters of stock-market crises, of mounting family expenses, of increases in the children's allowances, of plans made involving Father and sprung upon him at the last moment, of transient maids, of Mother's new dresses which Father fails to notice because he thinks they are old, and of anniversary presents which, though chosen with sentimental care, misfire because Father has to be reminded of their sentimental significance. The whole path of the comedy is, in other words, brightly lighted with such recognition signals.

Once again, however, the central figures remain Father and Vinnie. Father, of course, continues to be the Male Animal and Vinnie the Female Tamer. Regardless of the new situations in which they may find themselves, their relationship is unaltered. That Father wears the clothes of the Eighties no more dates him than his being a redhead called Clarence Day means he is merely an individual.

In this democracy of ours, which is really a matriarchy, he is the timeless archetype of the *pater familias*. He is at once the ruler and the ruled, the tyrant and the subject. He is all fathers as they are fond of seeing themselves, as they are seen by their children and seen through by their wives. More than being tolerated by Vinnie, his noise, his bluster, even his autocratic airs are encouraged by her. They ventilate his ego in harmless, if thunderous, ways. They keep him happy about the home by making him difficult, hence important. They grant his living an illusion indispensable to his vanity. But, as any wife outfront knows, and any husband too, though Father may crow on the roost, Vinnie rules it. She rules it with the time-honored wisdom of her sex by never letting him suspect that she is doing so. That is why, in her chirrupy but fearfully determined way, she is also an archetype.

Mr. Lindsay, the original Father in "Life with Father," was always amusing as the elder Day. He was never, at least in my opinion, as completely satisfactory as were Louis Calhern and Percy Waram when they took over the part. Their Fathers were not so close to vaudeville or to caricature. They were portraits rather than cartoons. As such, they were nearer to the spirit and quality of Mr. Day's sketches.

Mr. Lindsay's greatly beloved and almost universally admired Clarence Senior was, however, always funny, as I have hinted. If his "Oh God!" at moments of exasperation almost

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splintered the chandeliers, it certainly shook the rafters — with laughter. His thumpings on the floor for the cook below were fearsome demonstrations of authority. His dealings with his sons, his wife, and friends were carried off with undeniable spirit. In poster terms, he was all fatherhood; a kind of brownstone-front version of Jiggs in "Bringing Up Father."

ALTHOUGH Mr. Lindsay still plays broadly in reliable, instead of subtle, terms, his performance has mellowed. It may continue to be heavier in make-up than is either right or necessary. It is, however, not so strident as it was. It has got on the inside of the character and seems far more fully rounded. Once again its major concern may be projection. Yet no one can deny that it achieves its avowed objective.

Dorothy Stickney's Vinnie is captivating and knowledgeable. Whatever it may lack in voice, it can claim in charm. Her Mother, like Mr. Lindsay's Father, has bettered with the years. It is pleasant to find such other old friends in the company as John Drew Devereaux, who skilfully plays Clarence Junior; Ruth Hammond, whose Cousin Cora continues to be ingratiating, and Dorothy Bernard, who, as Margaret the cook, has somehow managed to survive Father's eruptions.

In "Life with Mother" Father is confronted for the first time with a male who is nearly his match. This intrepid character is the successful invention of Mr. Lindsay and Mr. Crouse. His name is Clyde Miller, and he is the "Hay, Grain, and Feed" man who has the honor not only of being Cousin Cora's husband from the Middle West but also a notary public. His disbelief in New York and everything and everyone connected with it is epic in scale. He is the kind of man who thinks he has final knowledge on every subject. Since the majority of men tend to be like that, and Father more than most, he and Father lock horns at once. Indeed, it is Clyde Miller, who, as acted by Robert Emhardt with a wonderful quietness, has the hardihood to accuse Father of being a "Wall Street swindler" right to Father's face. Believe it or not, he is not struck dead.

If Mr. Emhardt deserves special mention, so does Robert Wade as the poem-spouting little Harlan. He is hilarious when, at a moment of violent family upheaval, he cannot be stopped from reciting "An Incident in a French Camp"—with gestures. Guthrie McClintic's direction is throughout contributive. It keeps jostling the comedy into renewed life

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at those moments when it is imperiled by its own thinness.

The Days this time are not the exclusively urban folk they were in "Life with Father." The first two acts are laid at their country place, a house which as designed by Donald Oenslager is gracious in its feeling and brilliant in its use of period details. Mr. Oenslager's costumes likewise recapture the elegance of a vanished epoch. The third act of "Life with Mother" finds the Days back in their Madison Avenue home. It is the same setting, naturally refurbished after all these years, that Stewart Chaney designed way back in 1939. Seeing it once more gives everyone the feeling of being at home. As a matter of fact, this feeling of being very much at home is agreeably present throughout the whole of "Life with Mother."

—John Mason Brown.

FICTION

(*Continued from page* 15)

takes always turn out right, with a little unhappiness perhaps, but also with great gobs of real wholesome goodness. This irrepressible coziness permeates every problem: religion, poverty, hatred, frustration, fear. As a picture—or a reflection—of living people, which is apparently the novel's intention, it is completely unreal and unconvincing; nor is it helped by coyly self-conscious throwbacks to Jane Austen and the Brontës.

Yet the story goes through its twists and turns pleasantly enough, teasing our interest without commanding our credence.

More Lost Than Ever

LORD LOVE US. By A. M. P. Stratton. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1948. 320 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by Hollis Alpert

MR. STRATTON'S novel, his first, deals with a small group of young Americans who belong to a generation more "lost" than the "lost generation" of the Twenties. Not that they necessarily admit themselves to be lost, but their floundering around amid a mass of blasted preconceptions and unworkable codes and moralities is as plainly evident to themselves as to the reader—and so, with a kind of awareness about it all, they attempt to work out their lives into some semblance of order. Some utterly fail in this, some achieve a certain superficial stability.

The author has selected names for his characters which are as odd as any to be found in recent fiction. The narrator, who plays a prominent role in the story, is called Preserved Pearse—perhaps symbolical, for he is the one who manages to remain relatively whole at the end. He has a twin sister, Persis Pearse, who consistently crucifies herself on the cross of sex. The twins find themselves involved with an exceedingly vital young man named A.B.C. ("Abe") L'Hommedieu, and Abe has a brother, Caesar L'Hommedieu. The twins are rich, young Bostonians, bearing a faint resemblance to some of the characters J. P. Marquand has created in his Boston satires, although Mr. Stratton has stayed away from a satirical point-of-view. The L'Hommedieu brothers stem from a kind of decayed aristocracy, a Southern family, not so rich, but comfortable, since the family estate outside Charleston has been turned into an expensive resort place for Northerners.

Thus, these people can hardly be called representative of a younger American generation as a whole. It is the young upper class, socially and financially, that Mr. Stratton writes about. In limning their failings as members of a class he manages to be more dispassionate than bitter. As human beings, though, he sees them compassionately, and they take on a curious vitality as they manage to entangle themselves in Oedipal relationships, promiscuity, homosexuality, and other malaises which the author attempts to show as primarily spiritual in their bases. He spares them very little, offers them little solace, and one can't help thinking that sooner or later they're going to find their ways (if they remain alive—for Abe dies of what would appear to be a psychosomatic heart condition) to the leather-accoutered office of the analyst. Blame their roots, he implies, and blame, too, the diseased time they live in. So it's a grim book ideologically that he has written, and it is a grim book, and a subtle and sometimes explosive one, as a pattern of incident and event.

But it must be called a war book, too, for perhaps the most vivid section concerns the adventures of the Pearses and the L'Hommedieus as American volunteers with the French forces, before the defeat by the Germans. The men are ambulance drivers, and Persis is a nurse. And using these four as a focus Mr. Stratton achieves a stunningly realistic view

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of the Fall of France in 1940. In doing this, he is helped along no end by a flexible prose style and an acute sense of symbolical detail. He isn't yet a finished writer, for the dramatic interest sometimes bogs down in too much talkiness, too much philosophizing, too many literary allusions. But there is a sort of hard, glittering quality to what he has produced, and it is nice to find a new postwar novelist who not only has some sound tools for his art, but a good, inquiring mind with which to put them to work.

Flanders Fiefs

THE TOWER OF TERZEL. By Pierre van Paassen. New York: The Dial Press. 1948. 352 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by NATHAN L. ROTHMAN

I HOPE it is not amiss to quote, as text for this brief review, the closing sentences upon the back flap of the dust cover: "In 'The Tower of Terzel' Pierre van Paassen reaches out into what is for him a new field of literary endeavor—the novel. To it he brings the same mature talent, the deep understanding, the keen perception, and the philosophical mood that have made his previous books so universally loved and respected." To paraphrase Miss Loos, love and respect are very nice but a good novel needs to evoke something a lot more tangible. The point is that the writing of a novel requires talents quite different from those Mr. Van Paassen brought to his books of commentary on world affairs; and it does not seem that there has been any successful carryover in this instance. His philosophic mood is recognizable; not so his keen perceptions.

He has plunged into the history of Flanders for his material, and comes forth with a story that is part social text, part lurid melodrama, and altogether pedestrian in its telling. In his discussion of the struggle of the Flemish workers against the landholders, some of his prophetic ardor comes through, but the plot itself—revolving about the good squire Guido, his faithless new wife Mathilda, and her affair with his rascally son Rudolph—is poorly contrived and ends by becoming tiresome, a condition fatal to whatever other ends this novel may have been planned to serve. These ends are suggested in the character of Sylvain, a Christlike younger brother, and in the social and political discussions of a chorus of onlookers. Unfortunately Mr. Van Paassen has permitted his narrative to trail along behind Rudolph, an incredibly stagy creation, who drags it to dull oblivion.

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Poetry.

This week's reviews of poetry raise a number of interesting questions: whether the long flowing of formless free verse has not by now run its course; whether powerful psychological insight is not of more value than technical virtuosity; whether young rebellious poets do not sometimes indulge in decidedly third-rate thinking; such questions as these. Some interesting poets are examined, from the first book of Robert Horan, the second book of Herbert Corby, through William Everson (apparently a real discovery) and others, to the veteran work of Kenneth Fearing, now revalued by a brilliant newcomer, Peter Viereck. The effort of the poetry editor of The Saturday Review of Literature *will continue to be to bring fresh and individual judgments of contemporary poetry to the average reader—who is not average!*

Heavy-Stuff Version of Ogden Nash

STRANGER AT CONEY ISLAND AND OTHER POEMS. By Kenneth Fearing. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1948. 41 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by PETER VIERECK

FREE verse (prosaic, irregular, formless verse) is still being written, though it has become as yawn-provoking and arthritic a form of modernism as a glamorous rally of the Prohibitionist Party or the Townsendites. One of its most gifted and intelligent practitioners today is Kenneth Fearing. His school would perhaps repudiate the label "free verse" (a question of definition)—such arguments go back to the 1920's—in which case let's compromise by calling it half slave and half free.

Fearing is good at the game in this new book, but is the game worth the candle? The reason irregularity can be so attractive in poetry is its contrast with a background of some recurrent beat, scansion, and (often) rhyme-scheme. When the regular background does not exist at all, then the irregular foreground falls flat for lack of contrast and esthetic tension. This is why even the best free verse and formless verse gets forgotten so quickly (poor Amy Lowell); it simply does not sing its way into our memory. The challenge, to use a Toynbee metaphor, of rigorous form, is what helps evoke the beautiful response. Or, to use a Frostian metaphor, Fearing's verse is like playing tennis without a net.

—*Arm.*

Kenneth Fearing—"good at the game of free verse."

More brilliant than beautiful, "Stranger at Coney Island" is best at scathing our big-city banalities. No stranger to corny island, the author spots a cliché at every *cliché d'oeil.* The café night life of city slickers trying to be men-about-town gets duly unmasked—is it worth the bother?—for its pitiful secret loneliness. Fearing's O. Henry mood of breezy, yet compassionate, knowingness is typified by a title like "4 A.M." and a final punch-line like: "The booth where last night's love affair began, the spot where last year's homicide occured, are empty now, and still." These enormously long, unrhymed, irregularly accented lines are so sentimentally earnest and yet so incongruously and unintentionally reminiscent of Ogden Nash's light verse. The sentiment and earnestness don't come off because the flabby, sprawling formlessness prevents the needed trilogy of concentration, condensation, and intensity. The slapstick social satire does come off. If this were all Fearing aimed at, his success would be unquestioned. But he is too sincere a poet to be satisfied with cleverness; judging by his themes and his earlier books, he is aiming higher.

When I asked the girl at the book

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counter for "the new Fearing book," she replied: "Heavy stuff. Wonderfully intellectual!" Perhaps the *mot juste* for this book is: a Heavy Stuff version of Ogden Nash. The trouble is that some of us lowbrows and highbrows like our Ogden Nash straight. Or else our Longhair Stuff straight. *Aut Caesar aut nihil.*

Peter Viereck holds the combined posts of Associate Professor at Mount Holyoke College and Visiting Lecturer at Smith. "Terror and Decorum," a collection of his lyrics, was recently published.

Wormwood

TIME IN A BLUE PRISON. Poems by Herbert Corby. London: The Fortune Press. 1948. 64 *pp.* 7/6.

Reviewed by GERARD PREVIN MEYER

THOUGH Herbert Corby's second book comes from the same press that has published Thomas, Treece, Fuller, and Moore, it suggests only a tithe of his fellows' talents. It would be unkind to say that the title is the best thing about "Time in a Blue Prison," but it does arouse expectations that the verse rather lets down.

"Blue prison" is what the author calls his RAF uniform; and the tone of most of this book is in the tradition of postwar disillusionment that we have met with before, and in better poets (one thinks of Owen or even Sassoon). And (as before!) the shock takes dangerously nihilistic forms. Because Corby spent "three years I did not like," in which apparently his deepest impression was the lack of democracy in the ranks, the blunders of discipline, and the crassness of civilians, he blasts the whole effort: even, by implication or explicitly, exonerates the Axis.

Remembering Coventry, one blinks at Corby's accusation, leveled at his own side:

> A gothic shell was all they planned to leave
> Of Europe, of nations with not our ways

and at his easy dismissal of Nazi war crimes ("lies of rape and rot in other lands"). Lies? Then, he blames an impersonal "democracy" for the "promises that died." But who is to carry out these promises, now that the soldier is civilian?

Aside from this low-level thinking, Corby seems led astray by the devil of prolixity and the hope of easy poetic success. Almost all the seventy-three poems in this book are too long;

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many of them creak with familiar cadences. Memories of Owen are frequent, but not memorable. The meters sometimes falter, the metaphors fail to surprise, being either too heavily underscored or too easy; and, not seldom, the diction is outworn or rendered juiceless with abstraction.

Rarely, as in a poem like "Vampire," with its concentrated tone and exotic horror, his talent shows in a better light. In sum: Corby may be a poet to talk about some day—but not yet.

Subjective Weighing and Writhing

A BEGINNING. By Robert Horan. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1948. 87 *pp.* $2.50.

THE RESIDUAL YEARS. By William Everson. New York: New Directions. 1948. 148 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by DUDLEY FITTS

IT is interesting to read these two books together. Both poets are unusually subjective, preoccupied with questions of moral responsibility, with the subtleties of adjustment that a man must make to others and to his environment; both know the trick of expressing these matters in natural symbols of extraordinary clarity and freshness, and both write with a slogging kind of conviction that is often compelling. Of the two, Mr. Horan is the more expert craftsman: as Mr. Auden points out in his prefatory note, the technique here is of a wide and assured range, and it must be admitted that the poet is uncommonly sensitive to tonal nuances, rhythm, balance; Mr. Everson, with his free cadences and his exclamatory manner, seems somehow crude, unhousebroken, by comparison. Yet in spite of this, "The Residual Years" is the better book: better because it is more direct, more mature, and, to risk a purely personal judgment, more deeply felt. Mr. Everson may not be writing about more important things than is Mr. Horan, but he is writing about more immediate things, and more immediately.

This is not to say that what is memorable in "A Beginning" owes its effectiveness entirely to technical virtuosity, although the poems that I find myself returning to with most pleasure are little victories of composition. Examples are "Suppose We Kill a King," where the long-lined, supple quatrains admirably set off larger paragraphs of staccato, end-stopped verse; or "The Lark-hunter" (though marred by a childishly sentimental last line), where texture and cadence combine to make something almost tactile; or, best of all, the noises and sights of "The Lesser Kingdom," whose banal theme—the moral superiority of animals to men—is transfigured by sheer brilliance of writing into a philosophical statement which it is impossible to evade and difficult to forget. There is a passionate humanity in these poems and in half a dozen others that transcends the composition; yet it is always to the composition that one returns.

This is not true of Mr. Everson, who is, as I have said, less disciplined. It cannot be said that he has a particularly good ear: indeed, he can be painfully harsh and disconcertingly awkward; and there are few poems in his book that suggest more than an elementary feeling for structure. Moreover, his insistent, almost lurid eroticism is apt to betray him—as it betrayed D. H. Lawrence (his better) and that odd bard Benton of "This Is My Beloved" (his inferior, abysmally) into the hands of the leerers. Add to this a disregarding fury that permits archaisms like "Nor brand him base,/No, nor deem him insensate"; scenic marvels like "Soldier and girl,/ In their surd tussle,/Sprawled in a jeweller's door"; or mantic tropes like "Was I not fish?/In the windless womb,/In the Wilderness,/Was I not frog?/Turned I not in the turtle's torsion?" In spite of which lapses and Californian extravagancies, "The Residual Years" makes its point and makes it powerfully. The opening sequence, as martial narrative, may not be more than ordinary; but there is something much more than the ordinary in the assurance of its psychological probing, and entire sections of it—especially the first, a sharp and unforgettable treatment of a camp for conscientious objectors—are completely integrated and achieved poems. "March"—a poem about love, though scarcely a love poem—is an example of how economy and sheer control can prepare for and make plausible a conclusion whose sexual violence would otherwise blow the poem apart. There are small but perfect jewels of symbolic landscape, such as "The Approach" and "A Winter Ascent." And so on. "Flesh violent with love,/Flesh coiling and breeding these germinal poems"; the description is just. "The Residual Years" is germinal, and its proliferation haunts the mind.

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Life & a Lady's Stamp

OUT OF A CHILDHOOD. By William G. Angermann. Los Angeles, Calif: The Plantin Press. 1948. 127 *pp.* $2.50.

THE SEASONS' DIFFERENCE. By John Fandel. Hartford, Conn.: The Bond Press. 1948. 20 *pp.*

Reviewed by A. M. SULLIVAN

WILLIAM G. ANGERMANN is an alert reporter of the large and little events that make up our daily life, and occasionally he rises in his emotional pitch to the stature of a lyric poet. Some of his talents and faults as a poetic craftsman are in the "Last Dance":

Her dress foamed round his feet in-
sisting orders
in frothy whispers of caressing white;
it creamed a lingering touch across
the borders
between the two, and seeping out of
sight
in the wide stretches of his glance,
dismayed him
with sly retreats and little thefts of
grain
out of his heart.

Mr. Angermann has a good eye for the interesting and unusual image, but his poems frequently sag under the weight of rhetoric and the obvious phrase and sentiment. His objective lyrics are superior to the soul-searching, metaphysical verses. Angermann is a felicitous poet, and many individual lines invite quotation, such as "The street has shut its portals with soft shadows," but too many lines are loaded with an adverbial fungus which adds nothing to the idea or emotion expressed. The volume is an excellent example of the printing art.

John Fandel has dedicated his brochure to David Morton, Amherst lyric poet, but the little lady of Amherst of a generation or two earlier has flavored his poems. Emily Dickinson's stamp is on Mr. Fandel's rhymes, and not necessarily to his discredit, for he writes with a sharp discipline of ideas and with the impertinent and effective phrase. The title poem ends:

The years divide in chapters
Which show as evidence
The penalty of days and months,
The seasons' difference.

The last few poems in the brochure are not in the Dickinson mood and give promise that John Fandel's future work may reflect the originality which is suggested rather than actually revealed in this brief collection.

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Minor League Lyrics

FIRST TIME IN AMERICA. Corrected by John Arlott. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, Inc. 1948. 199 pp. $3.

Reviewed by HUBERT CREEKMORE

BY the definition of his title, Mr. John Arlott, in this anthology of twentieth-century English poems, is restricted somewhat to the lesser writings of important poets while bringing to our attention a few unknown poets. Though we need not be smug enough to assume that all the best has been brought us from England, I am afraid that on the basis of this book we aren't missing a great deal. At the same time we must realize that with each writer averaging about two poems it is difficult to judge whether he has any stature or has merely written two interesting poems.

From the introduction, I gather that Mr. Arlott has compromised to some degree between his own taste and that imposed by his work with BBC in poetry broadcasts, and has ended with a criterion of the "feeling" of poetry. Fine as BBC's work in this field is, the results of such indoctrination have a secondhand flavor in print. In general, a lackadaisical pallor suggestive of the Georgians hangs over so much of the book that I cannot agree with the editor that it indicates a healthy growth.

Here are the well-known names of De la Mare, MacNeice, Day Lewis, Sitwell, Spender, Dylan Thomas, and the newer Betjeman, Roy Campbell, Durrell, and Ruthven Todd. But here also are lines that read: "Violence, vanity, lust / Flee from, he cried, / Thee only trust"; and "Softly spills / An opalescent film in golden tides . . ."

The principal interest is certainly in the unknowns, and among them there is some bright promise in careful poems. Let me cite their names—Christopher Hassall, Robert Hunter, Norman Nicholson, Mervyn Peake, William Plomer, Andrew Young—and leave comment for a fuller representation of their work at some possibly later time.

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. "Love's Labor's Lost." 2. "Two Gentlemen of Verona." 3. "The Merchant of Venice." 4. "As You Like It." 5. "Twelfth Night." 6. "Measure for Measure." 7. "As You Like It." 8. "Cymbeline." 9. "The Tempest." 10. "Cymbeline." 11. "The Tempest." 12. "Much Ado About Nothing." 13. "Midsummer Night's Dream." 14. "The Winter's Tale." 15. "The Tempest." 16. "As You Like It." 17. "Midsummer Night's Dream." 18. "The Winter's Tale." 19. "Twelfth Night." 20. "Love's Labor's Lost."

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NEW EDITIONS

AMONG the new editions I have read recently, there are four that group themselves in my memory, and which I can highly recommend: Thad W. Riker's "A History of Western Europe" (Knopf, $6.75); Walter Bagehot's "Physics and Politics" (Knopf, $1.75); "Karl Marx's Interpretation of History" (Harvard University Press, $6), by M. M. Bober, and Edith Hamilton's "The Greek Way to Western Civilization" (Mentor Books, 35¢). These very different volumes collaborate in telling us quite a lot about ourselves.

Dr. Riker surveys the history of the European era which began with the Renaissance and the Reformation, with the emergence of the individual, the middle class, and the national state—an era which, in the opinion of some thinkers, has just about run its course. His view is broad, and, in the best sense of the world, philosophical. His management of the historical facts essential to his survey is masterly, but these facts are carefully selected, for, as he says, his concern is with the evolution of institutions rather than with wars and reigns and heroes. Our civilization is seen largely as a product of the interactions of the three emergent forces mentioned above; but, if Dr. Riker is not primarily concerned with war, it is still war which dominates his story to a degree which makes optimism, today, an act of faith rather than of reason. We cannot dodge the central truth that it is war, always war, which has established and consolidated, or shaken and destroyed, the work of the individual, the middle class, and the national state—makers of our Western world.

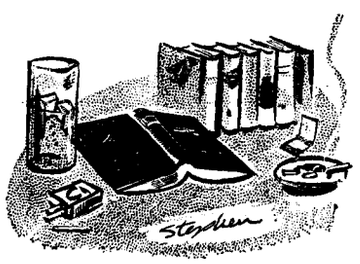
Walter Bagehot, in his pioneering, still exciting little book, written seventy-nine years ago, and now engagingly introduced by Jacques Barzun, underscores the truth that, "the progress of the military art is the most conspicuous, I was about to say the most *showy*, fact in human history." But he is most interesting when he is theorizing about the processes of nation-making and nation-changing, the springs of progress, conformance versus deviation, and the temporary benefits of "provisional institutions." Of the last, an outstanding example is slavery, the historical role of which was recognized by Engels, who declared, as quoted by Mr. Bober: "Without slavery, no Greek state, no Greek art and science; without slavery, no Roman Empire . . . no modern Europe . . . no modern socialism." As Miss Hamilton says, the Greek way of life was firmly founded on this institution. Until Euripides, "There was never anywhere a dreamer so rash or so romantic as to imagine a life without slaves. . ."

Bagehot's mind, if not great, was certainly first-rate and remarkably free of "the cake of custom," a mind that can hardly fail to stimulate any other that rubs against it. Mr. Bober's book is stimulating, too, in the performance of a more precise service. It analyzes with scholarly patience and objectivity, and with keen intelligence, the Marx-Engels theory of history, based upon modes of production and the class structure; and it justly evaluates both the serviceability and the shortcomings of the theory. For anyone who wishes to understand the Marxian system in its details, its contradictions, its insights, and its simplifications — instead of contenting himself with a cursory view and a cavalier judgment of the subject—this volume is sure to prove invaluable.

"The Greek Way" is also instructive. But it may be read chiefly for the pleasure afforded by Miss Hamilton's own pleasure in the literature and culture she knows so well; for an understanding of her understanding of a civilization which, locally and briefly, achieved a unique, creative integration of vital powers and social forces. It can be read, too, for a style which is controlled, beautiful, mature.

James F. Byrnes has made a contribution to history in "Speaking Frankly" (Grosset, $1.49), an account of his dealings with Stalin & Co., from Yalta to the Paris Peace Conference, during which period the Russians squandered their "deposit of good will" in this country, for the reason, one assumes, that it was of no value in their long-range scheme . . . Add good Pocket Books: Hawthorne's "Scarlet Letter" and Merimée's "Carmen and Other Stories" (25¢ each).

—BEN RAY REDMAN.



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Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
THE CORPSE IN THE CORNER SALOON *Hampton Stone* (Simon & Schuster: $2)	Female tenant of Third Ave. apartment badly strangled. Possible slayer found poisoned in grogshop. Assistant D.A. traces tenuous clues to finish.	Generally nasty lot of characters engaged in generally distasteful goings on. Well enough done, but definitely not for q-ueasy palates.	Earthy
SHOES FOR MY LOVE *Jean Leslie* (Crime Club: $2)	Calif. shoe designer capriciously protects redhead he finds standing over just-shot corpse. Subsequent slayings prove, via cops, he was right.	Characters and background especially good, although details of latter sometimes con-fuse. Amateur and police detecting efficient and finish satisfactorily surprising.	Good number
CATCH ME IF YOU CAN *Pat McGerr* (Crime Club: $2)	Wealthy ailing husband of tawny blonde beauty murderously extinguished. Killer knows someone is on trail—but who, and how? And How!	Read this for its exceptionally clever idea—and not much more. People are stencils and dialogue turgid. But what a plot!	Good—with reservations
DEATH HAUNTS THE DARK LANE *A. B. Cunningham* (Dutton: $2)	Murder of young girl on Southern country lane points to several too obvious suspects until Jess Roden studies needles and such.	Less lurid than last two or three Roden yarns, and considerably better detected. Sheriff's canine and other assistants function quite handsomely.	Good grade
TESTIMONY IN SILENCE *Doris Miles Disney* (Crime Club: $2)	New husband of rich and amiably obtuse widow mysteriously poisoned. Spouse's family accuse her—but time tells all.	Everything all right about this excellent period piece (1880's—rural Conn.) except silly error on jacket, which needn't be read.	Nice going
MURDER IS SERVED *Frances & Richard Lockridge* (Lippincott $2.50)	Psychology prof. in N.Y. college senses potential murderess among pupils and tells, of all people, Pam North. Then things start happening.	Admirable mixture of hate, murder, action, and romance with Loot Wiegand doing major sleuthing and Norths in at finish.	Something special
THE D.A. TAKES A CHANCE *Erle Stanley Gardner* (Morrow: $2.50)	Western D.A. Doug Selby tangles with various females and wily criminal lawyer in solving apparent suicide of sultry blonde.	Alluring ladies carry burden of plot in tale which is better characterized than earlier Selby sagas and has action to spare.	Stencil—but expert
THE HOLLOW NEEDLE *George Harmon Coxe* (Knopf: $2.50)	Apprehensive pix-man Murdock takes shot of tycoon that gets him in trouble when latter dies—as do several other unfortunates.	Plenty of suspects, swift sleuthing, highly pitched family atmosphere—mainly malevolent—and "dream" finish that works out.	Standard brand

Immediate Hour

By Hannah Kahn

AGAINST all time, God, let me hold this hour
Inviolate, not merging with the stream
Of time that carries with it all the power
That we invest in every fragile dream.
Knowing the flux of days unto each other
How quick the pictures blur, how time can cast
Her shroud about the memories we gather,
Give me this hour, now, distinct and fast.

This is a sonnet broken. No, entangled . . .
The hour passed and merged with time's demand;
And yet I once saw stars and heavens spangled
With glory that survived time's moving hand
And all that was and can no longer be
Still sheds its silver radiance over me.

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"...BUT HE'S AN AMERICAN"

(Continued from page 23)

behaving in good taste without in the least sacrificing any of our traditional sociability, but that the minority of Americans were throwing their weight around and acting as though the special favors they received throughout Europe were theirs by divine right. I thought of the official instructions to local policemen in many countries to look the other way if Americans should violate any but the really major laws. We had the dollars and the Europeans didn't. It caused Europeans in many countries to smile at Americans behind gritted teeth and outstretched palms, and it made Americans resentful when they saw behind the smile or when their hotel or restaurant bills were padded, or when cabbies doubled their fare, or when price labels were hastily changed, or when mysterious "supplementary" charges were tacked on to services or goods. Either way—seen from the vantage point of the Americans or the Europeans—it was an unhealthy business and we were losing—both sides were losing—instead of building up good will.

I was thinking of all these things when Paul tapped me on the knee and asked whether I would answer his questions, now that Uncle Robert had shifted them to me.

I told Paul, told him honestly, that I was searching for the answers myself. I told him that there was no more important problem in the world than finding a way for different peoples to get along with each other—especially when circumstances favored one and not the other. I told him that there were many Americans who believed that thousands of Europeans might not have died of sickness or hunger after the end of the war if America had acted promptly and had regarded the needs of mercy as not less important than the needs of victory. These Americans were unhappy, I told Paul, that the United States had to wait almost three years before enacting the Marshall Plan—especially since one of the chief arguments in Congress for its passage was of a military nature.

But the important thing today, I said, was that something *is* being done, and that America at last *is* committed officially to the common welfare. The important thing is that Europe *is* getting back on its feet. The important thing, too, is that if only we could lick the problem of war, the peoples of the world would have a chance for

real progress and health such as the human race has never before known. But this would mean they would have to do a much better job of protecting and conserving the earth and its natural resources than ever before—and also a much better job of avoiding economic catastrophes which could be as bad as war itself.

"And Paul," I said, looking at him carefully to see if I was making any headway, "when it comes to these matters of economics, I am afraid that we grown-ups have gotten ourselves all tied up in knots. Now when you were talking about money before, you were actually making a lot more sense than many people who are supposed to understand its workings but who make it sound complicated because they're not quite sure themselves."

Paul beamed. *"Mistaire Koo-zahns,"* he said, "now I understand. You have answered my questions. You talk just like you were eleven years old too."

I accepted that as a real compliment.

—N. C.

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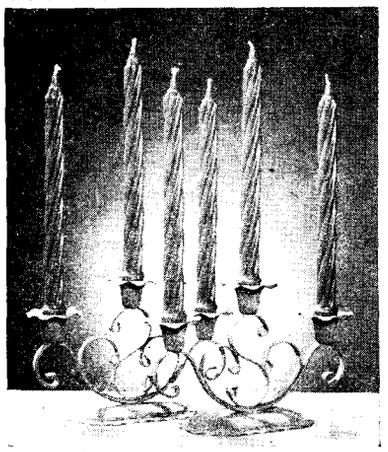

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FROM ME TO YOU

(Continued from page 8)

dustry and more—but how much more they won't tell you, nor what their respective slices are. But they and their competitors, who sell only to independent retailers, account for only half of the business. Another group sells wholesalers, chain stores, cut-rate drugstores, and so on. And still another large group sells cards directly to the consumer—house to house, like Fuller brushes.

About half of the greeting cards produced are Christmas cards. Valentine, Easter, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Thanksgiving, and New Year cards account for about ten per cent. The remaining forty per cent are called Everyday in the business and include Birthdays, Anniversaries, Get-Well Cards, Congratulations, Thank-You's, Condolences, Why-Don't-You-Write?, and a wilderness of variations. Mr. Hall of Hall Brothers tells me he received a complaint that there were no cards in his line for Ground-Hog Day or Saint Swithin's Day. Imagine his surprise when some one dug up out of the company's files a card with a picture on it of a noble ground-hog deep in thought and over him a chaste greeting, "Thinking of You on Ground-Hog Day."

The new Valentines, like the women's fashions, have taken on that New Look, which is really the old peek. The long skirts are back and lace fans and demure glances. Lest you forget how Valentines used to read back in 1870, here is an authentic example:

Oh! come to Love's fountain and sip in the stream,
And the heart you adore shall be thine:
Haste, come to Love's fountain, where true love doth flow,
And again meet your dear Valentine.

With the possible exception of elephants, practically nothing has a longer gestation than Christmas cards. This year's Christmas cards have been on their way since February 1947, when they started as poetic throbs in the feverish brains of greeting-card writers. From there they went to the Planning Department, where they were compelled to run the gauntlet of miles of comparative sales statistics to prove that they had sales appeal—that Me to You magic, ever old and ever new. Then they went to the Art Department, where they were wedded to their designs. And then to Production, where they went through a bewildering variety of highly technical operations—engraving, embossing, buffing, beveling, bordering, punching, boxing.

Almost a year of this before the salesmen got hold of them. Tradition permits salesmen to carp and criticize and say all the harsh things they can think of before they reluctantly take Christmas cards out on the road in February to expose them to the withering contempt of the dealer. But finally the dealer too relents and orders the cards. The manufacturer starts shipping them in July, with the hope he can collect for them in January. At that time he will have spent two gruelling years with Christmas 1948, and will be up to his mistletoe in Christmas 1949.

You may well wonder how anyone would have the heart to say "Merry Christmas" to a greeting-card manufacturer. Come to think of it, no one has ever written a sentiment for this depressing occasion. So here goes:

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO A GREETING-CARD MANUFACTURER

All to myself I think of you,
Think of the hell you've just gone through
Think of Ye Quainte Olde Christmasse Cheer—
How you're fed up with it—clear to here!
Sometimes I think when you were wee
You fell on your head from a Christmas Tree,
But I keep such thoughts, you Hapless Elf—
All to Myself.

J. P. McEvoy, roving editor of The Reader's Digest, *is a literary virtuoso. Besides greeting cards, he has authored comic strips, musical comedies, novels, verse, and innumerable magazine articles.*

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The New Recordings

COMPOSITION, PERFORMER, ALBUM NUMBER, NUMBER OF RECORDS	ENGINEERING *Recording Technique, Surface*	PERFORMANCE AND CONTENT
WAGNER		
WAGNER, WALKURE; WOTAN'S FAREWELL, MAGIC FIRE MUSIC. (a) N. Y. Philharmonic, Stokowski MX. Columbia 301 (2). (b) Paul Schoeffler; London Symph. Rankl. Decca London EDA 46 (2).	An unusually good technical comparison. The Stokowski-Philh. is an excellent, wide-range job, good acoustics; but play the Decca version next to it and judge for yourself. A bigger, fuller sound, better highs, bass. (Allow for diff. turnover.)	A A With Wotan's voice or without — take your choice. The Stokowski all-instr. version is first-rate playing; Rankl's is alive, compares quite well, though inferior. Schoeffler is mild but good Wotan, beautifully recorded; no question, the voice adds something.
WAGNER, FLYING DUTCHMAN ACT I; WIE OFT. Joel Berglund, Orch., Blech. RCA Victor 12-0532 (1).	Good orch. (low turnover, heavy bass); voice seems off-mike, a rather unnatural liveness. Good balance.	A Berglund makes a good, honest Wagnerian with much dramatic feeling and energy, though minus hard edge of a Melchior; a nice record, Svanholm's slack wobble kills what limited dramatic tension he has. No soap.
WAGNER, TANNHAUSER; ROME NARRATIVE. Set Svanholm, RCA Victor Orch. Weissmann. RCA Victor 12-0528 (1).	Not unlike above, but voice more natural. With Victor's domestic high turnover (weaker bass).	A Janssen is a fine, intelligent Wagnerian bass, with deficient voice, his work is good but can't stand up to the tremendous Nissen job in complete German recording (V DM 537, 8); Quintet is just plain sloppy, a rush job no doubt.
WAGNER, MEISTERSINGER; SACHS'S ARIA, QUINTET. Janssen; Stolska, Ralf, Glaz, Garris; Met. Opera Orch., Rudolf. Columbia 72518-D (1).	One of those oversharp, over-close-to recordings, dead acoustics. Not at all good for Wagner, in spite of detail that comes through—too much!	A Just one more version of this eternal pair, and not an exciting one at that. Routine, I'd call it.
WAGNER, TRISTAN; PRELUDE AND LOVE-DEATH. Chicago Symphony, Rodzinski. RCA Victor DV 21 (2 pl.).	A dullish recording, at least on plastic; weak on highs, tendency to distort in loud parts. Hardly a premium job.	AA
MOZART		
MOZART, VIOLIN CONCERTO, G MAJOR, K. 216. Jacques Thibaud, Lamoureux Orch. Paray. Vox 642 (3).	Vox imports new recordings — this has a nice, wide range, without undue sharpness, excellent chamber-style acoustics, ideal for M. Some peaky distortion.	A— to B+ Grand old (68) man of French violin, a bit inaccurate here, but gives an enjoyable performance, considering. Orch. is alive, bit rough in its playing. A superb second movement in this.
MOZART, PIANO QUARTET #1 IN G MINOR, K. 478. George Szell; members Budapest Quartet. Columbia MM 773 (3).	Small-room acoustics, unexciting but, after all, exactly correct for this music. Fine balances strings, piano.	A Sequel to recording, same group, of #2. (*SRL*, July 6, 1947). Another "G minor" work—those who know will rush for it. Szell is first-rate Mozart pianist.
MOZART, CONCERTO FOR THREE PIANOS, K. 242. Lhevinne, Vronsky, and Babin; Little Orchestra, Scherman. Columbia MM 771 (3).	Brilliant, thinnish acoustics, small empty hall effect. Pianos rather distant, bit tinny. Not too bad.	A— to B— (low levels) A bright, perfect work; more to it than this impeccable performance gives. A commission — one piano obviously written for a beginner!

—EDWARD TATNALL CANBY.

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TURNING the pages
Of one of Mr. U's numerous anthologies,
I came on him again,—
Among the solemn ecstacies and agonies,
His verses crackling like grass in a dry field.

And I remembered him, years back:
At his desk—in the *World*, in the *Trib.*,—
Sleeves rolled to the elbow,
Collar open, tie hanging loose,
Committing wit
To copy-paper, to linotype, to newsprint,
To the breakfast tables of the nation,
Where bankers and brokers erected it
Between them and their wives
(Who, after all, could not be a new edition each morning);
Where college boys, in commons,
Tossed it back and forth in shouts
Across the coffee cups,
While Euclid waited and Aristotle slept,—
Though Horace and Catullus and Propertius,
Traveling the road from Rome,
Survived the iron intestines of the Merganthaler,
To sound themselves again in English verse.

There was an interim,
The age of no Conning Tower,
The dark age. . . .

Till Information Please,
On the air, on the screen;
And This Man Adams,
Plopped down behind a microphone,
Looking like D. H. Lawrence's "Kangaroo":
"Like a liquid drop that is heavy
"And just touched earth,
"All her weight dripping sackwise down";
And the wit crackling again,
And America listening and laughing.

And this was the morning and the evening of the forty years.

And I bethought me of the college boys
Of forty years ago,
Now bankers and brokers, laughing again;
And of the bankers and brokers
Of forty years ago,
Now gone to tell a tale to the shade of Horace,
Of America, reading,
America, listening.

And I wrote this Homage,
Out of a wish that he
Might hear America thanking
FPA.

—DAVID MORTON.

* * *

The season is saddened for me by the death, on November 8, after long illness, of a valiant, high-hearted, and true lyric poet, Genevieve Taggard. She wrote about realities. Daughter of deeply religious parents (school teachers in Hawaii), she wrote with a religious fervor for social justice. In her poetry and in her teaching that was part of her fiber. And in the course of her life she faced down at least one terrible specter. Her later years were fruitful and happy. At one time it seemed to me, and I feared it, that she had dedicated her life to a code as rigid as that of the old Puritanism. But it proved powerless to check that lyric voice. It was powerless to alter the shy irony, the genuine mirth, the "scorn of scorn" that is the poet's true birthright. I think of Genevieve Taggard as a free spirit. She was beautiful. She was feminine. Once I wrote a poem to her, though I am quite positive that she never knew it. She reminded me of the spirit of a stream, changeable (though not in the deep things), impetuous, impatient, and meditating and lonely. The lines of her dedication to her "The Life and Mind of Emily Dickinson" show her affinity to that immortal sprite, though she sternly sang allegiance to the USSR in wartime, and to the great Cause. In her last book, "Slow Music," she said:

Let the poem be like a drum,
Let it have heart-beat,
Let it have heart.

In another poem which gave the title to her book of 1942, "Long View," she really penetrated into the dream of the future that all idealists cherish. How she made a certain matter-of-factness about it so *singing* was her own secret. I am glad that in her volume of collected poems of ten years ago she put on the initial endpaper Henry Leland Clarke's music for her poem "Lark" and made that the closing poem of the volume. Here I can only quote the fine opening of that song of triumphant faith in mankind:

O lark, from great dark, arise!
O, lark of light,
O, Lightness like a spark,
Shock ears and stun our eyes
Singing the day-rise, the day-rise, the great day-rise.

* * *

AFTERMATH

The heads of pollsters
Are made to hide under bolsters.

—SAUL KANE.

* * *

The NEST was as surprised as many by the Election Day results, though the NEST'S vote was cast for President Truman. I liked particularly the fond farewell tendered to the President by a columnist of the *World-Telegram;* it dismissed him from the scene with such overpowering kindness! But the amusements and ironies of the situation were innumerable. I was awakened, having slept late after long vigil, by the voice of Mr. Gallup saying that he was *not* giving himself an alibi. He then proceeded to do so. I was reminded by the whole situation of Chesterton's introductory remarks to his novel "The Napoleon of Notting Hill." You remember that he said:

> The human race, to which so many of my readers belong, has been playing at children's games from the beginning, and will probably do it till the end, which is a nuisance for the few people who grow up. And one of the games to which it is most attached is called "Keep Tomorrow Dark," and which is also named (by the rustics in Shropshire, I have no doubt) "Cheat the Prophet." The players listen very carefully and respectfully to all that the clever men have to say about what is to happen in the next generation. The players then wait until all the clever men are dead, and bury them nicely. They then go and do something else. That is all. For a race of simple tastes, however, it is great fun.

Take out the phrase "in the next generation" and omit the burying of the clever men, or bury them merely under a snowstorm of ballots, and you have what happened. I, for one, am overjoyed.

—WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

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